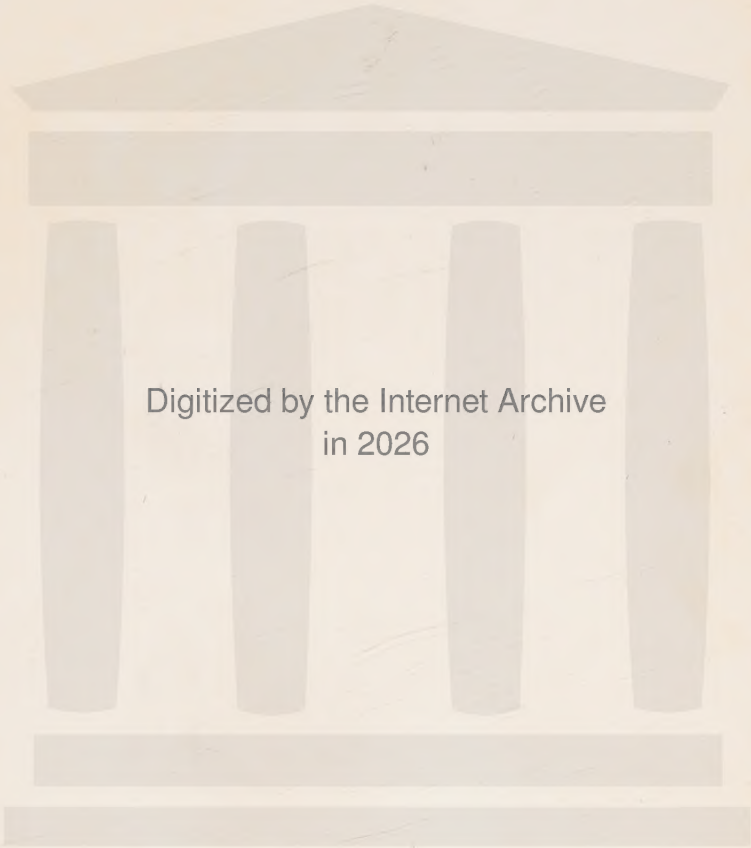

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/puritaninholland0000doug_a9d1

THE PURITAN

IN

HOLLAND, ENGLAND, AND AMERICA

AN INTRODUCTION

TO

AMERICAN HISTORY

BY

DOUGLAS CAMPBELL, A.M., LL.B.

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

NEW YORK

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

KEENE STATE COLLEGE
LIBRARY

48481
10/7/65
E
188
.C2
v.2

Copyright, 1892, by Douglas Campbell.

All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME

PREFACE

PAGE

Reasons for writing another book about the Puritans.... xxiii
Investigations among early New York records..... xxiv
New England institutions found in New York when a Dutch colony..... xxiv
Holland must have been a common source, as they did not come from England..... xxv
Search for others.—Puritanism as a political force began in Holland..... xxvi
The war with Spain a Puritan war.—Great number of Englishmen in the Netherlands..... xxviii
Influence on England overlooked by English historians.. xxix
Influence on America more marked, but equally overlooked..... xxx
Incompleteness of American history, and its causes.—Written only from English standpoint.—English self-appreciation..... xxxi
Another cause.—Scientific historical investigation of very modern growth..... xxxiii
All histories being rewritten..... xxxiv
Dangers of early writers in Europe..... xxxv
Until a recent date, government archives closed to the public..... xxxvi
Difficulties in the way of their examination in England. xxxvii

PAGE

Little attention paid to foreign history when American history first written xxxix
Results of modern investigation xl
Early American history where Bancroft left it fifty years ago xli
History of English Puritanism unintelligible as usually written, and why xli
Neglect of the influence of the Netherland Republic xliii
When America settled, Holland, in general civilization, led the world by about two centuries xlv
New England Puritans misrepresented in history xlvi
Modes of meeting charges against them xlvii
English, and not Puritan, defects of character exhibited in America xlix
The whole truth regarding English civilization the vindication of the New England Puritans l
Scope of this work li

INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

Assumption of most writers that the people of the United States are an English race with English institutions 1
Effects on American history 2
How this idea has been developed 3
Ignorance of Englishmen regarding America 5
For Americans no such excuse 6
American people always cosmopolitan. — Some of their leading men in colonial days 7
Middle colonies at time of Revolution.—Half of population not English 9
Leading institutions of United States not of English origin. 11
Influence of institutions upon national character 11
No State Church as in England.—Its importance there ... 12
Its abolition in the United States 15
Principle of civil equality underlying American system.—Its derivation 16

PAGE
The written Constitution of the United States and England's unwritten Constitution 17
The President, Senate, House of Representatives, and Supreme Court.—Not English 19
How regarded by English statesmen 20
The state constitutions more important as showing the growth of American institutions 22
Their development and provisions 23
Distribution of land in England, and its effects.—Primogeniture 25
Obstacles to its alienation.—No recording system 26
Enclosure of English common lands 27
England entering on an era of change 27
Distribution of land in the United States.—Its importance. 29
Popular education in America.—Its early date 30
Popular education in England.—Its recent date 32
Opposition of the governing classes 33
Public libraries in England and America 35
Free high schools and colleges 36
Defects in English university education.—Why American students go to the Continent 38
Rapid progress of American colleges 41
Local self-government.—The English system incomprehensible 42
The American system, township, county, and state 44
Importance of the townships.—The system not English ... 45
Religious liberty in England and America.—Date of its introduction 47
Freedom of the press.—Date of its introduction 48
The written ballot.—Date of its introduction 51
English and American charitable institutions contrasted ... 54
Prison reforms.—Debt of England to America 55
America's reformatory institutions copied in Europe 57
America's legal system and its origin 59
Opposition of the colonists to English jurisprudence 61
Modern jurisprudence derived from the Roman law 63

PAGE
The character of this law 64
Influence of ancient Rome on modern society 65
Rome when the civil law took its present form 68
American legal reforms copied by England 70
America's debt to England—language, literature, character, Yankeeisms, etc 72
The theory that the institutions of America were invented by the early settlers 74
America the old world 76
The institutions of America very old; partly Roman, partly Germanic 77
The Netherlands preserved Roman institutions and Germanic ideas of freedom 78
The home of the English race and the instructors of England 79
Causes and effects of England's prejudice against the Dutch 79
Americans should not share it 82
Importance of Netherland history to the modern student .. 83
The Netherland Republic as contrasted with monarchical and aristocratic England in learning, art, and public morals .. 84
The English have never understood republicans in Holland or America 87
Puritanism and American institutions 88

CHAPTER I

THE NETHERLANDS BEFORE THE WAR WITH SPAIN

THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE, AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, COMMERCE, AND ART

The Puritan of Holland 90
The country of the Netherlanders a conquest of man 92
The geographical factor in history.—England an illustration 95
Its importance in the Netherlands 96
Influence on the national character 98
The importance of the human factor 100
The early inhabitants of the Netherlands 101
Germans in the North, Celts in the South, the foremost of their races 101

PAGE
Their characteristics 102
The Hollanders preserved their Germanic spirit 104
Connection with Rome and Italy.—Its influence 105
Contrast between England and the Continent 106
Italy never became barbarian.—The crusades and their results 108
Italians in the Netherlands 110
Development of agriculture.—The Netherlands become the instructors of Europe 111
England's backwardness 112
Development of manufactures and commerce.—They become the manufacturing centre of Europe 113
Originate woollen manufactures 114
Advance in the fourteenth century.—Wealth and luxury as compared with France and England 115
Outstrip Italy in the commercial race 117
Their architecture, ecclesiastical and secular 118
Their town-halls the delight of the artist 120
Private dwellings, their furniture, etc.—Comparison with England 120
Painting.—Founders of modern art.—Discover oil-painting 122
Originate portrait and landscape painting 124
Character of Netherland art.—"The beautiful the splendor of the true" 125
Foremost in the mechanical arts, jewelry, tapestry, etc 126
Wood-engraving their discovery 127
Printing from blocks 128
Printing from type its natural sequence 128
Music.—Furnished music and musicians to Europe for two centuries 129

CHAPTER II

THE NETHERLANDS BEFORE THE WAR WITH SPAIN

THE GUILDS, THE TOWNS, THE STATE, EDUCATION, RELIGION, AND MORALS

Contrast between Puritanism in the Netherlands and in England, and causes of difference 131

PAGE
Condition of the Netherlands at the abdication of Charles V., 1555 134
Seventeen separate states, each with its individual government.—Their population 135
Holland and the herring fishery 136
The towns of the Netherlands, a survival of Roman institutions.—Citadels of freedom 137
Bruges and its origin.—A modern town 139
The guilds, partly Roman and partly German 140
Their organization and government.—Minor republics 142
Spirit of equality in guilds 144
Albert Dürer and the Painters' Guild of Antwerp 145
The Netherland towns, their charters and form of government 147
Antwerp a type of the larger towns 148
Town government in Holland 150
The rural districts.—Serfdom abolished.—Condition of the peasants 151
The organization of the State, and State government.—No taxation without consent 152
First meeting of the States-General, 1477 154
The Magna Charta of Holland.—Its provisions 155
Freedom of trade and commerce 156
Education.—Organization of the "Brethren of the Life in Common," 1400 158
Their numerous schools, and their influence on education. 159
Scholars in the Netherlands.—Erasmus, Vesalius, St. Aldegonde, etc 160
Phenomenal education of the masses 161
The Reformation in the Netherlands.—Heresy an old story 162
Early editions of the Bible in the common tongue.—More generally read than in any other country 163
The Reformation begins at the bottom among the common people.—Its exceptional character 164
Victims of the Inquisition greater in number than in all the rest of Europe 166
Protestant sects in the Netherlands.—Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anabaptists 167

PAGE
Religion and morality not necessarily allied in Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries..... 168
This severance not confined to the Catholics..... 169
Holland a moral country, and so the bulwark of Protestantism..... 170
Private and public integrity..... 171
High position of her women..... 172

CHAPTER III

REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS (1555-1574)

Why revolution did not come earlier.—Philip II. contrasted with his father, Charles V..... 173
Eleven years of misrule and Inquisition..... 174
Origin of the "Beggars," 1566..... 175
The Iconoclasts..... 176
Philip II. and his chief adviser, the Duke of Alva..... 177
Bright prospects for Spain a century before..... 178
How her liberty was destroyed..... 179
Disastrous effects of discovery of America on Spanish character..... 180
Ruin of national prosperity.—Military greatness..... 181
Alva a typical Spanish soldier of the time.—His arrival in the Netherlands, 1567..... 182
The Council of Blood..... 183
Exodus of Netherlanders to England..... 184
William of Orange..... 185
His undisciplined armies defeated by Alva..... 186
The "Beggars of the Sea."—Elizabeth's seizure of Philip's money..... 188
Alva's financial difficulties.—His proposed tax and its effects 189
Suspension of business, and Alva's plan for its renewal... 192
Capture of Brill by the "Beggars," 1572..... 193
General uprising in the northern provinces..... 195
Reorganization of the government by a popular vote..... 197
Bright prospects for the future, 1572..... 198
France friendly—deliverance at hand..... 200

PAGE
Massacre of St. Bartholomew, its causes and disastrous results in the Netherlands.—Elizabeth's connection with it 201
Cuts off all hopes of French assistance 203
Holland left to fight alone 203
Reliance of William of Orange on Providence.—Basis of Puritanism 204
Position of Holland, and character of the war 205
The siege of Harlem, 1573 206
Its surrender.—Cold-blooded butchery of garrison and inhabitants.—Great loss of Spaniards 209
Spaniards repulsed from Alkmaar.—Refuse to assault the works.—The country flooded 211
Alva recalled to Spain.—His work a failure.—Succeeded by Requesens 212
Siege of Leyden begun, 1574.—Successes of the patriots 213
Rejection of proposed amnesty on condition of giving up the religious question 215
Leyden saved by cutting its dikes.—Heroism of the inhabitants 216
University of Leyden founded, 1575.—Marks an epoch in the history of education 217
Becomes the centre of the learning of Europe 218
Its famous scholars.—Honors accorded to them 219
Contributions of Holland to science 222
Invents the telescope, microscope, pendulum clock, etc 222
Tolerance of Leyden.—English Dissenters among its pupils 223
University of Franeker.—Instruction free as in Leyden 224
Application of confiscated church property in the Netherlands.—Contrast with England 225
Hospitals and soldiers' homes 226

CHAPTER IV

REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

INDEPENDENCE DECLARED—ASSASSINATION OF WILLIAM OF ORANGE —RELIGIOUS TOLERATION ESTABLISHED, 1574-1585

The perilous condition of Holland 228

PAGE
Death of Requesens, 1576 229
Mutiny of Spanish soldiers.—"The Spanish Fury."—They sack Antwerp and other towns 229
All the provinces unite to drive out the invaders 229
Arrival of Don John of Austria 230
His romantic scheme for the conquest of England 231
Assistance for the Netherlanders from England and France 231
Death of Don John 232
Arrival of the Prince of Parma, 1578, a soldier and a diplomatist 233
He wins back the southern provinces.—The North stands firm 233
"The Union of Utrecht" the written constitution of the Netherland Republic, 1579 233
Declaration of Independence, 1581.—Its importance.—Copied by England and America 234
The Duke of Anjou, brother of the French king, proclaimed sovereign 236
Wooing of Elizabeth by Anjou.—Its comical and serious features 236
Anjou accepts the sovereignty of the Netherlands.—His inglorious career and death, 1584 238
Attempts of Philip to bribe William of Orange 240
His assassination, 1584.—The foremost Puritan of the age. 240
Results of his work.—Seven provinces redeemed 241
Difficulties of his task.—Comparison with Cromwell 242
Religious toleration established.—Its novelty in Europe ... 243
William denounced at home, but he carries the day 244
He protects the Anabaptists, who first proclaim religious liberty and separation of Church from State 245
Their doctrines and their treatment in other countries 246
Origin of religious liberty in the United States.—Its debt to Holland 249
Virginia's Declaration of Rights, 1776 250
New York first establishes religious liberty by constitutional enactment 251

PAGE
Influence of Holland in religious matters on the general government of the United States 252
Results of the assassination of William of Orange.—The people have no thought of surrender 254
A republic forced upon the Netherlanders 256
They offer the sovereignty to France.—The "Holy League," formed against Henry of Navarre, prevents its acceptance 257
Spain marching on to universal dominion 259
Protestant England and her queen 260
Thus far Elizabeth had kept out of the religious war upon the Continent.—Her methods no longer practicable 261

CHAPTER V

ENGLAND BEFORE ELIZABETH

Obstacles to a correct view of the Elizabethan age in England 262
False glamour of the poet and novelist over an age very backward in many directions 263
Poetry not a fruit, but the flower, of civilization.—Homer and Dante 265
Shakespeare and Bacon produced by the same causes 266
Bacon not a learned man; ignorant of science, Latin, etc.. 267
Little appreciation of Shakespeare in England until a recent date 268
The same true of Bacon as a scientist 269
History of England a peculiar one, marked by waves of progress, all due to foreign influences 271
Modern tendencies to exaggerate the Anglo-Saxon influence 273
High civilization under the Romans 275
Its importance to the student of Continental history 276
Entirely obliterated by the Anglo-Saxons 277
The country becomes again a pagan barbaric land 278
The Anglo-Saxon barbarians.—"Battles of Kites and Crows" 279
The Anglo-Saxons deteriorate, lose their ideas of personal freedom.—The king, the serf, slavery 280

PAGE
Conversion of England.—Its character and results..... 282
The Danes and King Alfred..... 283
Results of six centuries of Anglo-Saxon rule. — English virtues..... 284
The Norman conquest the great event in English history.. 287
How the Normans obtained their civilization.—Connection with Rome and the East..... 287
Conquest of England.—Comparison of the Normans with the Saxons..... 289
They introduce the French language.—English disappears for nearly three hundred years..... 290
Build the cathedrals, found the universities..... 291
Study of the Roman civil law begun..... 292
Debt of England to the Jews.—They introduce the study of the physical sciences.—Roger Bacon..... 293
The Normans give England her institutions, good and bad, the feudal system, judiciary, trial by jury, etc..... 295
Magna Charta.—Its origin and character..... 296
Organization of the English Parliament..... 296
Expulsion of the Jews.—Introduction of the Netherland weavers..... 299
Final absorption of the Normans by the Anglo-Saxons.—Return of the English language.—England rapidly goes down..... 300
Chaucer stands on the border line.—His song awakens no echo..... 300
The Hundred Years' War with France.—Disastrous results to England..... 301
Pestilence. — Abandonment of agriculture. — The sturdy beggars.—Restriction of the suffrage..... 303
Decline of learning.—Wyclif and the Lollards..... 304
The Wars of the Roses still more disastrous in their results 305
Despotism of the Tudors.—Civil liberty trodden underfoot. —Literature and learning almost dead..... 307
The printing-press in England.—Its paltry results..... 308
The Oxford reformers and their small classical acquirements 309

PAGE
Advanced scholars on the Continent 310
The Reformation and its evil effects under Henry VIII... 312
The movement almost entirely a secular one 313
Still worse under Edward VI 314
Proposition to demolish Westminster Abbey 315
Demoralization of all classes.—Public corruption.—Fraud in manufactures 316
Religious reaction under Bloody Mary.—Tale of the martyrs 317
When Elizabeth ascended the throne, the state of society the worst that had ever been known in the land 319

CHAPTER VI

ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

PRIVATE LIFE, EDUCATION, RELIGION, AND MORALS

Changes in England during the last three centuries 320
At accession of Elizabeth little commerce, manufactures, or agriculture.—Largely a pastoral land 321
Revolution of industries produces great demoralization of society 321
Dwellings of the English 322
The Shakespeare house at Stratford 323
The first English theatres 324
Mansion-houses of the gentry 326
Chimneys very rare, also window-glass, beds, carpets, and chairs 326
Great improvements with increase of wealth under Elizabeth 327
The castles of the Earl of Northumberland.—Their accommodations 328
London and its houses 330
Rushes for carpeting.—The queen's palace 331
Forks unknown until 1611.—Table knives introduced, 1563 332
The Englishman's food 333
Prices of the time 333
Fondness for sweets 335
The dress of the Englishman.—Its peculiarities 336

PAGE
Female attire.—Introduction from the Netherlands of starching and linen underclothing 336
Reverence for the crown.—Its manifestations 337
Popular sports, bear and bull baiting 340
Education.—Exaggerated ideas from a few isolated cases. 341
Elizabeth and her acquirements 342
England far behind the Continent in the classics.—Mathematics and science reprobated.—Experience of Giordano Bruno 343
Reform of the calendar, 1582 345
Not adopted in England till 1752.—Opposition of the people 346
Peers of the realm could not read 348
Ignorance of the middle and lower classes.—Shakespeare's family 349
Retrogression since Norman times 350
Condition of religion 351
The clergymen 352
The bishops 353
Decline of morality.—Its causes 353
Foreign opinions of Englishmen 354
Elizabeth's untruthfulness, bad faith, dishonesty, and profanity.—An example for her people 355
Immorality of her court.—Increases during her reign 357
Morals of the people at large 358
May-day and other festivals.—Their excesses 359
Evil influences of Italy and its literature 360
Earnest men in time will work a revolution 361

CHAPTER VII

ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

PUBLIC LIFE—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—TRADE—TREATMENT OF IRELAND—PIRACY

Character of men about the court 363
Corruption in State and Church 365
Administration of justice 366

PAGE
Every right trampled underfoot 367
Protest from the judges, 1592 368
Pardoning of criminals a regular business among the courtiers and maids of honor 369
Prevalence of crime.—Bands of robbers 370
Adulteration and fraud in manufactures 372
Gambling.—Its curious forms 373
Usury.—Lotteries.—Drinking 374
The English in Ireland.—Their objects 375
Opinion of Lord Burghley as to Irish rebellions 376
Attempt of Earl of Sussex to assassinate Shan O'Neil, 1561. 376
Second attempt with poison 377
Scheme of English worthies for plundering Ireland, 1569. 379
Massacres by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, etc 380
Earl of Essex's breach of hospitality and murder of two hundred Irish, 1573 380
His massacre of six hundred women and children at Rathlin 381
Sussex, Gilbert, and Essex in history 383
English piracy.—Its importance 384
Cabot's voyage.—No effects on English commerce, which was almost wholly in the hands of foreigners 385
Spanish and Portuguese commerce.—Its expansion 386
English shipping.—Its low condition 387
Lord Burghley's scheme for encouraging mariners.—"Piracy detestable and cannot last" 388
It does last, and builds up England's naval greatness 389
Its origin and character 389
Attempts of Spain to keep the peace 390
Englishmen plunder Catholics and Protestants alike 390
Piracy leads to the slave-trade of England 392
African slavery in America 393
Attempts of Spanish government to mitigate its evils 394
Voyages of John Hawkins.—The queen his partner 395
Disastrous termination of third voyage.—Fires English heart 397
Elizabeth seizes Philip's money.—Results of her action ... 398

PAGE
Francis Drake leads a piratical expedition 401
Drake sails around the world, 1580 402
Distribution of his plunder.—Knighted for his piracy 403
Burghley, Sussex, and Walsingham refuse to share his spoils.—They desire open war with Spain, which Elizabeth opposes 403
Drake a national hero 404
Growth of the spirit of patriotism.—Hatred of Spain 405
English Protestantism.—Influences at work 407

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLISH PURITANISM

THE JESUITS AND THE PURITANS, 1558–1585

Character of English Reformation 408
Compromise disliked by the earnest men of either party .. 409
Religious torpor in England 409
Apathy of English Catholics 410
A sudden awakening 411
Catholic reformers on the Continent produced by the Reformation 411
The Jesuits, their origin and growth 412
Their missionary work 413
Reform the Catholic Church 414
Establish free schools 415
Become the educators and confessors of Catholic Europe .. 416
Not consistent with historic truth to conceal their virtues . 417
Check Protestantism.—Become the bulwark of papacy ... 417
England a missionary field 418
English missionaries educated at Douay and Rome 419
Their success in England 420
Jesuit mission, 1580.—Campian and Parsons 420
Revival of Catholicism, and its causes 421
The people open to conviction.—Proportion of Protestants to Catholics 423
Crushing out the Catholic revival.—Why it was possible .. 424
English Puritans.—Their place in history 425

PAGE
Opinions of Hume, Hallam, and Macaulay 426
Novelty of Puritan principles in England 429
Growth of Puritanism unexplained by historians 429
Accession of Elizabeth 430
Uncertainty as to the religious future of the nation 431
Why Elizabeth proclaimed Protestantism 432
Action of her first Parliament.—It reconstructs the English Church 433
Vast powers conferred on the queen 434
Return of the English Reformers from the Continent.—Their experiences abroad 435
Inclined to Calvinism, and opposed to forms and ceremonies, and why 436
Their expectations for the future 437

CHAPTER IX

ENGLISH PURITANISM

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE PURITANS, 1558-1585

Elizabeth's religious inclinations 438
Controversy in the Church over the question of ceremonials 439
Name of Puritan comes into existence, 1564 440
Persecution of the Puritans begun, 1565 441
John Foxe and his "Book of Martyrs."—Its great influence 442
Its author a Puritan.—His treatment 444
Persecution of Miles Coverdale, the translator of the Bible into English 445
Suppression of independent congregations, 1567 446
English statesmen opposed to persecuting the Puritans ... 446
Motives of Elizabeth 447
Her scheme of reconciliation with Rome.—The Puritans its greatest obstacle 449
Her communications to the Spanish ministers 450
She shields the Catholics 451
Corruption in the Church fostered by Elizabeth, and why . 453
Dishonesty of her bishops 454

PAGE
How the bishops obtained their offices 455
Elizabeth the great plunderer of the Church 456
Ignorance of the clergy 457
The Puritans favor education.—Discouraged by Elizabeth. 458
The Spanish advisers of Elizabeth warn her against the Puritans 460
Thomas Cartwright advocates Church reforms on Presbyterian lines, 1570 462
Denounces the system of appointing bishops.—The system still in use 463
Expelled from Oxford and flies to the Netherlands 465
Continued persecution of the Puritans 466
Attempt of the bishops to educate the clergy, 1571 467
Suppressed by Elizabeth 468
Anabaptists burned for heresy, 1575 469
Archbishop Grindal suspended for favoring preaching and the education of the clergy 470
Whitgift appointed archbishop, 1583.—His ignorance and narrow-mindedness 470
Elizabeth determines "to root out Puritanism" 471
Whitgift introduces a system which Burghley says is modelled after the Inquisition in Spain 471
Wholesale expulsion of Puritans 473
High Commission Court organized.—Its vast powers 474
The English Inquisition and its results 475
Protests from Privy Council, Catholic and Protestant, unavailing 476
Low state of clergy.—Morality of no account in comparison with conformity 477
The Bishop of London will not remove a conforming clergyman "for the mere fact of adultery" 478
Early Puritanism dying out under continued persecution .. 480

CHAPTER X

ENGLISH PURITANISM

INFLUENCE FROM THE NETHERLANDS, 1558–1585

PAGE

The influence of the Marian exiles does not explain the religious history of England 481
Decline of Puritanism among the upper classes 483
Results of Elizabeth's persecution 484
How Puritanism came to dwell among the middle classes and the poor unexplained by historians 486
Early emigration from the Netherlands into England 487
The Lollards found where the Netherlanders had settled 488
Under the persecutions of Philip II. the stream becomes a mighty river 488
Number of Netherland refugees in England, and places of their settlement 489
Beginning of the industrial history of modern England ... 490
The refugees instruct the English in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce 491
Aid in making England Protestant and free 492
Greatest missionary work known to history.—Its peculiar advantages 493
The Netherland settlements the strongholds of English Puritanism 495
Influence in developing a love of civil liberty 495
The places of their settlement the recruiting ground of Cromwell's army, and the homes of the settlers of New England 497
More immediate influence on England 500
Contest with Catholicism as a political power 501
The war in the Netherlands an object-lesson to England .. 501
Fifty thousand Netherland families proclaiming the atrocities of Catholic Spain 502
Effect on England 502

PAGE
Impressionable nature of the English people..... 503
English volunteers for the war in the Netherlands..... 504
Exhibition of ancestral courage..... 505
Catholic uprising in Ireland, 1580..... 507
Ferocity developed by the Irish wars..... 508

PREFACE

I HAVE attempted in the following pages to trace the origin and development of Puritanism, the greatest moral and political force of modern times, with special reference to its influence on the people and institutions of the United States, my lines of investigation differing widely from those which have heretofore been followed by historians. How the work came to be undertaken is, of course, in itself a matter of no importance. And yet a public, well-nigh surfeited with books about the Puritans and the early settlers of America, may reasonably call upon an author to give, at the outset, some good reason for asking a further share of its attention to an old and apparently threadbare subject. To such a very proper question this preface is intended as an answer.

When a law student, more than twenty-five years ago, I began collecting material for a history of the jurisprudence of Colonial New York. The field was comparatively unexplored, for, as I discovered, most persons supposed that little was left of the old records. Much to my surprise, I found in various quarters a great wealth of matter, and after some years began to arrange the results of my investigations. Then, finding how closely

political and legal questions were intertwined in this early history, I concluded to enlarge the scope of my work, so as to show the growth not only of the legal but of the constitutional system of the state. And here I met a series of surprises, for I encountered at every turn traces of institutions and ideas, generally supposed to have been derived from England, or at least to be of New England origin, but which clearly, so far as concerned New York, were derived from a different quarter. Here were free schools, the system of recording deeds and mortgages, lands held in common by the towns—all under the old Dutch rule; here the doctrine was first laid down by a legislative assembly that the people are the source of political authority; here were first established permanent religious freedom, the right of petition, and the freedom of the press. On the other hand, here were no executions of witches or Quakers, and no kidnapping and enslavement of the Indians.

In comparing this record with that of New England, the points of contrast were no less remarkable than those of resemblance, while all the deductions from such a comparison were opposed to the ideas inculcated by our current histories. From their earliest school-days Americans have been told that this nation is a transplanted England, and that we must look to the mother-land as the home of our institutions. But the men who founded New York were not Englishmen; they were Hollanders, Walloons, and Huguenots. The colony was under Dutch law for half a century; its population was probably not half English even at the time of the Revolution; and yet here one finds some of the institutions

which give America its distinctive character, while, what is more remarkable, no trace of many of these same institutions can be found in England. What was their origin became to me an interesting question. New York, which was first settled, certainly did not derive them from New England, and New England probably did not derive them from New York. Could there have been a common fountain which fed both these streams, the debt to which has never been acknowledged? Of course, the Netherland Republic must have been this fountain, if one existed; but to prove its existence, and the mode in which its influence was exerted on New England, required an examination far outside the records of New York.

Hence a new set of questions arose before me, relating to the character and environment of the men who settled America, especially the Pilgrims who lived so many years in Holland, and the Puritans who flocked there in thousands during the reigns of Elizabeth and the first two Stuarts; what civilization they had as Englishmen, what they saw and learned among the Dutch, and what they carried back to England and across the Atlantic. The importance of the latter questions can be seen at once. If I was correct in my hypothesis as to the debt which America owes to Holland—a debt incurred not only through New York, but also through the Pilgrims and Puritans of New England, and, as I afterwards discovered, through the Quakers of Pennsylvania—then our American history would occupy a different position from that usually accorded to it. Instead of standing alone as a phenomenon, to be studied by itself, or as a

continuation of the record of Englishmen, to be studied on narrow insular lines, it would fill a much broader field, reaching back to Continental Europe, linking itself to the old civilization of the Romans, and forming more distinctly a part of that modern history which has been said to begin with the call of Abraham.

The pressure of professional labors prevented me for many years from devoting much time directly to this branch of study, but it was largely the occupation of my leisure. I was able to make two visits to Holland, and meanwhile a great mass of literature appeared throwing new light upon some of these questions. Finally, about six years ago, a permanent illness gave me an enforced rest, and I concluded to finish my history of New York. After reading over my old manuscript, I set out to write an extended introduction to the work, treating of the various settlers of America before they crossed the Atlantic, their civilization at home, the character of the institutions among which they were developed, and the connection of those institutions with the historic past. That introduction, as I extended my investigations, has slowly grown into the present book. Its conclusions may seem novel to some readers; but if true, they will stand despite their novelty.

I have chosen as a title "The Puritan in Holland, England, and America," because the Puritan, who has done so much for the modern world, was not the product of any one race or country. He was born out of the uprising against the abuses of the Church of Rome. He came to maturity in upholding liberty against the as-

saults of kingly power. In him was represented the principle of religious and civil freedom.*

* I have used the word "Puritan" in this book, when applied to Englishmen (except when otherwise qualified), as it has been generally used in history. It came into the language about 1564, shortly after Elizabeth ascended the throne. Fuller's "Church History," ix. 66. Its strict meaning changed from time to time, being sometimes religious, with varying applications, and then again political, thus creating a confusion that has led to many historical blunders, but its popular signification has always been the same. See, for example, its employment by Shakespeare. Among the people of England at large the name came finally to be applied to all those who were religious and moral, and who, either by word or life, protested against the irreligion and immorality of the time. In Baxter's "Autobiography" we see illustrated the use of the word in the reign of Charles I. Baxter's family were called Puritans, although they were strict Conformists, or Episcopalians, because they never got drunk and went to church regularly. The people judged them rightly, for Baxter became a chaplain in Cromwell's army. Religion and morality revolted against authority as it was then represented by the Stuarts. Strictly speaking, as will be shown in its proper place, the name was confined to those Calvinistic members of the English Church who sought its reformation from within. These men formed the large majority of the settlers of New England. Those who left the church were called Brownists, Separatists, or Independents, and from them came the Pilgrim Fathers who settled Plymouth. The name Puritan, however, was not confined to England, nor have I given it any such narrow limitation. In 1587, Lord Buckhurst visited Holland as the representative of Queen Elizabeth. He reported of the people of the Provinces that they consisted "of divers parts and professions, as, namely, Protestants, Puritans, Anabaptists, and Spanish hearts." Buckhurst to the Queen, May 27th, 1587; Motley's "United Netherlands," ii. 123. See also Motley's "Barneveld," ii. 119, 284, 285.

The armed contest began in Holland, and lasted there for eighty years before it was transferred to England. In its early days, nearly a hundred thousand Netherlanders, driven from their homes by persecution, found an asylum on British soil. Throughout it was a Puritan warfare. The Earl of Leicester, sent by Elizabeth to aid the rebellious Netherlands, was politically in sympathy with the English Puritans. The grandfathers and fathers of the men who fought with Cromwell at Naseby and Dunbar received their military training under William of Orange and his son, Prince Maurice. Thousands upon thousands of them, during a period of some seventy years, served in the armies of the Dutch Republic. Many others, driven out of England by Elizabeth and her successors, settled in Holland, and a still larger number went there for business purposes, engaging in trade and manufactures, while keeping in close relations with their native land. Some of the refugees, after a residence of years among the Puritans of the Netherlands, emigrated to America; others returned to England, and took up arms under the Long Parliament.*

---

* Fairfax, Essex, Monk, Warwick, Bedford, Skippon, and many others—in fact, the men who organized the Parliamentary army—received their military training in the Low Countries. "The Fighting Veres," by Clements Robert Markham, p. 456. The famous Ironsides of Cromwell were trained by Colonel Dalbier, a Hollander, and the same officer did a much more important work by giving Cromwell his first instruction in the military art, teaching him, as Carlyle says, "the mechanical part of soldiering." Carlyle's "Cromwell," i. 193 (ed. Wiley & Putnam, 1845). The first judge advocate of the Parliament's army was also a Hollander, Dr. Dorislaus. Idem, p. 231.

The Englishmen, very many thousands in number, who found a temporary home in Holland were the most active and enterprising of their race. They went from a monarchy, where the power of the crown over many questions of Church and State was unlimited, to a republic, where the people for centuries had been accustomed to self-rule. They went from a land where, from natural causes, material and intellectual progress had been much retarded to one which, in almost every department of human endeavor, was then the instructor of the world. That they must have learned much, apart from the art of war, and that they must have communicated much to England, seems apparent at a glance to any one conversant with the situation. And yet we shall search through English histories in vain for any but the slightest allusions to the effects of this foreign influence.

Important as this subject is to Englishmen who care for the truth of history, to Americans it is still more important. In England, after the restoration of the Stuarts, the influence of the Netherland Republic, great as it was for a time, seemed to be almost lost. It was not lost, in fact, any more than are those streams which suddenly disappear beneath the surface of the earth, only to break out in what appear new fountains farther on their course. In America, however, there was nothing to cause even such a temporary disappearance. The Pilgrims who settled Plymouth had lived twelve years in Holland. The Puritans who settled Massachusetts had all their lives been exposed to a Netherland influence, and some of their leaders had also lived in Hol-

land. Thomas Hooker, coming from Holland, gave life to Connecticut, which has been well called the typical American commonwealth. Roger Williams, who founded Rhode Island, was so much of a Dutch scholar that he read Dutch books to the poet Milton. Penn, who founded Pennsylvania, was half a Dutchman. New York and New Jersey were settled by the Dutch West India Company. Here, then, we might expect to find traces of the influence of the great Netherland Republic even more marked than in the case of England.

And how have the historians of America dealt with this subject? Here is a country which was settled by men of diverse nationalities. It has always been cosmopolitan. Its institutions differ radically from those of England. The modes of thought of its people are not English. The two countries are, in some respects, drawing together to-day, but this is simply because England is adopting ideas like our own, and coming towards our republican institutions. Despite all these facts, known to every American, we are continually told that we are an English people, with English institutions; and all American history has been written upon that theory. Scarcely an attempt is made to trace out the cause of the manifest differences between the two countries, by looking at the institutions and modes of thought of the other nations which influenced our early settlers, and contributed so largely to our population. Our descendants will probably view the result somewhat as we regard most of the classical histories of a century ago.

Such is the mode in which American history has been written. Why it has been so written is an inter-

esting question, the answer to which is, however, very simple.

In the first place, its authors have been almost exclusively Englishmen, or descendants of Englishmen, living in New England. Now the English have never been wanting in that appreciation of themselves which has characterized all the master races of the world.* This trait of character has played no small part in the development of their world-wide empire, the education which has taught them to believe in their natural superiority over men of other nations having largely aided to fit them for great actions. In addition, it has led to their recording every achievement of an Englishman, and thus to the completeness of their chronicles, and the unexampled mass of their literature relating to Englishmen and English actions.

But with its advantages there are some corresponding disadvantages. One of their brilliant writers, who has lived for years upon the Continent, has well said, "The difficulty with which the English can be brought to respect the French can be partly explicable by their difficulty in respecting foreigners in general, unless they

* The Venetian traveller who wrote the "Relation of England," in 1500, nearly four centuries ago, says: "The English are great lovers of themselves and of everything belonging to them. They think that there are no other men than themselves, and no other world but England; and whenever they see a handsome foreigner they say he looks like an Englishman, and it is a great pity he should not be an Englishman; and whenever they partake of any delicacy with a foreigner they ask him whether such a thing is made in his country." Printed by the Camden Society.

have been dead for a long time, like Homer and Virgil, or are invested with a sacred character, like Moses and Isaiah."* No reader needs to be told that this attitude towards foreigners is not peculiar to Englishmen, even among modern nations, although, as exhibited by them, it may seem at times a trifle emphasized. Still, however conducive to the greatness of a people, and whether found in Greece, Rome, France, England, or America, it does not conduce to the writing of full and accurate histories, which must, of necessity, deal with the affairs of other nations.†

---

* Philip Gilbert Hamerton, "French and English," *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1886, p. 22. Lecky speaks of "that hatred of foreigners so deeply rooted in the English mind, and which has played a part that can hardly be exaggerated in English history, "England in the Eighteenth Century," Amer. ed., pp. 1–19. See also opinion of the Duc de Sully, in 1603, Motley's "United Netherlands," iv. 156.

† How foreign history is generally regarded in England, even at the present day, is well illustrated by the interesting discussion which was carried on there during the winter of 1885 and 1886, over the question, "What books shall we read?" Sir John Lubbock, the eminent naturalist, opened with a list of one hundred books; others followed, until most of the distinguished scholars of the kingdom had been heard from. The intention was to select one hundred works, the knowledge of which would make the best education for an Englishman. The range was wide; the various lists covered the poetry, science, philosophy, and general literature of all nations. No fault could be found with them on that score; but it is very curious to see the way in which history was treated. Classical history—that is, the life and growth of dead nations—was fully represented. The history of England also occupied a large space. But in all the lists only three allusions were made to the modern history of any people except the English. One authority recommended

Here, then, in the fact that American history has been written mainly by Englishmen, or by men of English descent, and entirely from an English standpoint, we find one natural explanation of its incompleteness—an incompleteness found in the history of every nation, when the author is moved more by a patriotic desire to cast a halo around his ancestors than to arrive at the exact truth.* But, apart from all this, there is something more important and far-reaching which has affected all the early writers about America who have shaped popular opinion.

Comparatively few persons, perhaps, appreciate how recent a science is that of historical investigation. Less than a century and a half ago, Sir Robert Walpole, lying upon his death-bed, and requesting a friend to read to him, was asked to select the book. "Anything but history," he answered: "that must be false." The dying statesman, who for more than twenty years, as Prime Minister of England, had been making history, knew

---

Carlyle's works, which would include his "Frederick the Great" and "French Revolution;" and the head master at Eton recommended Thiers's "Consulate and Empire." See the lists, *Westminster Review*, July, 1886, p. 99, "What and How to Read."

* English writers are keen enough in the appreciation of this failing in their American cousins. Sir Henry Maine, in his last work, speaks of "the nauseous grandiloquence of the American panegyrical historian," "Popular Government," p. 222. Doyle, in commenting on the writings of the early New England settlers, says: "We are reading not a history, but a hagiology."—"The English in America. The Puritans," by J. A. Doyle (the Longmans, Green, & Co., 1887), i. 4.

full well whereof he spoke. His criticism was somewhat novel then, but the period since its utterance has made the sneer a maxim. In his time, to the common mind all history was alike: the legends of Livy and the personal observations of Tacitus, the gossip of Suetonius and Cæsar's story of his own campaigns, all were equally true and equally sacred. To question them was well-nigh heresy. But to-day is the age of the iconoclasts. Under their blows our old idols are crumbling to powder. They dig up the musty records from which history has been made; they search into the lives of the historians to find out what were their sources of information, and they seek further to find out why they wrote. True science is exact, for it is founded on laws which are immutable; true poetry is immortal, for its breath is inspiration; but history is like the work of the photographer, it depends for its accuracy upon the material, the workman, the focus, and the atmosphere. No wonder if the scholar rises from his task to say with Walpole, as to much of it, that "it must be false."

It was Voltaire, as Buckle has pointed out, who first brought secular history to the bar of human reason. By attacking the early fables of Greece and Rome he laid open the broad domains of the past to the fearless seekers after truth. What they have done as to the classics is known to every schoolboy. We have seen a host of great scholars, led by the audacious Niebuhr, reconstructing Roman history; we have seen another army sifting the grains of truth from the fairy tales of the Greek historians; while, almost to-day, an indefatigable explorer exhumes the walls of ancient Troy, and shows

to the world that Homer was no writer of mere romance.

But it is not ancient history alone that our scholars are rearranging. Everywhere, in almost every land, they are delving among the records, getting at the truth of modern history. It is not easy to realize how difficult this task has been until a recent date. Every one has heard of the French chronicler who was charged with treason by Richelieu for having in his works told some distasteful truths about a king who, for two centuries, had slumbered in his grave. That, we say, was long ago. So were the actions of Louis XIV., who withdrew a pension from one historian for some impertinent remarks about taxation, kept Fénelon in banishment for a supposed criticism of his reign in the romance of "Telemachus," and threw another author into the Bastile for innocently revealing a state secret in a panegyric of himself. This was the custom of the age. Histories written under such auspices would hardly be entitled to much credit.*

But when this danger passed away, and in the last century historians could, in some lands, venture to tell the truth, the question arose, how the truth could be obtained. History, says Carlyle, is "ever more or less the written epitomized synopsis of rumor." It will, of

* Hallam very wisely remarks that the invention of printing was at first detrimental to historical accuracy. When men wrote books only for the use of themselves, their friends, or a limited circle of readers, they could tell what they understood to be the truth. When books came to be printed for general circulation, they could in most countries tell only what was agreeable to the authorities.

course, as to many public events, be simply rumor run mad, unless corrected by official records, diplomatic correspondence, and other state papers which, until very recently, were regarded in all countries as the property of the monarch, and for reasons of state denied to the historian.* One can imagine the position of a writer who sat down to compose a work upon his own or any other country when such material was everywhere kept a secret.

The French Revolution, and the ideas which followed in its train, first developed the modern theory that official documents are for the public good, and that as to past events the public will be best served by being told the truth. How much has been brought to light since the archives of some of the old monarchies have been unlocked is a familiar story even to those acquainted only with the works of our own Prescott and Motley, who led the van in this department of investigation. But while France, Spain, Holland, and other countries have been aiding the historian, conservative England has been one of the last powers in Europe to open its records to the public, and even now has not done so fully. How this has affected American history can be readily understood.

In 1841, John Romeyn Brodhead was sent to Eu-

* This theory and practice still prevail at Rome. The pope has always been the depositary of valuable state secrets. It is well known that in the archives of the Vatican repose documents which would solve many historical problems of great interest. If they are ever thrown open to examination, numerous points in history will doubtless have to be revised.

rope by the State of New York to procure copies of documents relating to its colonial history, from the public offices of England, France, and Holland. He went as an accredited agent from a friendly power, supported by all the influence of the general government. It was known that the State Paper Office of England contained a mass of correspondence of the royal governors, minutes of the Board of Trade, and other documents which would throw much light on early American affairs. In Holland were supposed to be valuable papers relating to the Dutch period, and in France others connected with Canadian relations. Such proved to be the case, and in each of the latter countries the New York agent was treated with the greatest courtesy. He was allowed to examine all the colonial records, was aided in every manner, and furnished with copies of such documents as he selected.

In England he met with a very different reception. Lord Palmerston replied to his application to look over the colonial records by saying that if he would designate the particular paper which he wished to see, it would be officially examined, and then, if there were no objection, he could obtain a copy at the customary rates. As Mr. Brodhead knew nothing of the documents, and wished to look them over to find out which were valuable, this proposition of the noble Secretary was a virtual denial of his request. Thus matters stood for about a year, when a new Liberal ministry came into power. Under its regulations he was at length permitted to examine the original records, and was furnished with copies of such as he selected, although

annoyed by petty harassing restrictions, and charged exorbitant fees. There the theory still existed that such papers formed part of the monarch's private library, access to which could be obtained only through royal favor.*

Lest some uncharitable reader might suppose that this was exceptional treatment, extended to an American by his English cousins on account of their near relationship, let me cite another example. In 1844, C. M. Davies, an Englishwoman, published the last volume of a valuable history of Holland. In preparing her work she desired to consult the correspondence of the English ambassador at The Hague, from 1750 to 1780. This correspondence was kept in the same office with the papers relating to American affairs. The Englishwoman, less fortunate than the American, was not allowed to see the papers at all, and was compelled to send her book to press without their aid.†

The mission of Mr. Brodhead to Europe accomplished a great result. He brought back with him a large collection of documents relating to American history, many of which never before had seen the light. Those in French and Dutch were translated, and in 1856 the whole were published by the State in ten large volumes, entitled "Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York." So far as public events are concerned, these are not rumors, but true material for

---

* See report of Mr. Brodhead, "Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York," vol. i.

† Davies's "Holland," iii. 607.

history. Their importance can be appreciated when we think of the material used by most historians before they were given to the world. In 1836, James Grahame, a Scotchman, published his "History of the United States," a pioneer work in Great Britain, and one which has been looked upon with considerable favor in New England. The author tells in the Preface how his volumes were compiled. He evidently never visited America, and never consulted an original document of any kind. He borrowed entirely from other books, mostly those published in New England; and even for them he had to go to Göttingen, in Germany, on account of the deficiencies of the British libraries.*

When Grahame wrote his book, very few persons in England or America knew or cared anything about foreign nations or their history. Davies's volumes on Holland had not appeared, and those of Motley were not yet thought of by their author. In France the documents were just coming to light which, within the past few years, have caused French early history to be rewritten, showing the character of the Huguenots who formed so large an element of our American population.† It was at this same period that Bancroft wrote his first three volumes, which deal with our colonial history down to 1748.‡ Composed under such condi-

---

* See Preface, "Grahame's History of the United States," vol. i.

† See Baird's "Rise of the Huguenots in France," vol. i. Int. p. 5.

‡ Grahame's work was published in 1836; Bancroft's, vol. i. 1834; vol. ii. 1837; vol. iii. 1840. These closed the early period. Davies's "Holland," vol. i., appeared in 1841, the "New York Colonial Docu-

tions, and from such material, one need not wonder at the character of our early American histories. Written only from an English standpoint, that of neglect of everything not Anglo-Saxon in its origin, they would naturally be incomplete; but when we add the further fact that even the English material was largely inaccessible to the historian, nothing in the result will cause surprise.

In the half-century which has elapsed since the publication of Bancroft's third volume, bringing American history down to 1748, great advances have been made in the science of historical investigation. In addition, numberless documents have been discovered, apart from those relating to New York, which illuminate the whole period of the settlement of America and the making of the republic. Motley, Froude, Ranke, Masson, Gardiner, and a host of others have not only thrown much new light on the condition of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but they have shown in various ways the close relations which existed between the English Puritans and their republican brethren in the Netherlands — relations which were little thought of fifty years ago. It would seem to be impossible for an unprejudiced reader even to glance over this modern historical literature without at least surmising that

---

ments" and Motley's "Dutch Republic" in 1856. Bancroft used many documents which he obtained for himself in Europe, but it never seemed to have occurred to him that the Netherland Republic might have exercised an influence on the early settlers of New England.

America, which differs so widely from the mother country, might show rational and historical reasons for being different. And yet, with floods of light pouring in from every quarter, and while scholars are rewriting the history of almost every country on the globe, so powerful has been the current of popular opinion that the story of early Colonial America, in this particular, stands today substantially where Bancroft left it fifty years ago. The attempt is still made by the great majority of writers to trace everything American to an English source; and when that search proves fruitless, resort is had to the inventive genius of the inspired first settlers, and to that alone.

But, as I have already suggested, it is not American history alone which has suffered from ignoring the existence of the Netherland Republic, and its influence upon the modern world.

Carlyle, in his Introduction to the "Letters and Speeches of Cromwell," says: "One wishes there were a History of English Puritanism, the last of all our Heroisms; but sees small prospect of such a thing at present. Few nobler Heroisms, at bottom perhaps no nobler Heroism ever transacted itself on this Earth; and it lies as good as lost to us; overwhelmed under such an avalanche of Human Stupidities as no Heroism before ever did. Intrinsically and extrinsically it may be considered inaccessible to these generations. Intrinsically, the spiritual purport of it has become inconceivable, incredible to the modern mind. Extrinsically, the documents and records of it, scattered waste as a shoreless chaos, are not legible. . . . The Rushworths, Whitlockes, Nalsons, Thur-

loes; enormous folios, these and many others have been printed, and some of them again printed, but never yet edited—edited as you edit wagon-loads of broken bricks and dry mortar, simply by tumbling up the wagon."

Many persons besides Carlyle have probably wished for a history of English Puritanism. But this Heroism, like that of the making of the United States, will remain unexplained and unintelligible just so long as it is looked upon as a mere chapter of English history, and not as an outcome or continuation of that great Continental movement, intellectual and spiritual, which, in the sixteenth century, revolutionized the world. Neither can be understood, unless we recognize the true intellectual, moral, and religious condition of the English people, out of which their Puritanism, with all its faults and virtues, was evolved, and appreciate the influence which must have been exerted upon such a people by the close proximity of a republic the leader of the world by at least a century in agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, and by more than two centuries in all ideas relating to civil and religious liberty.

To the American this appreciation should not be a task of difficulty if he enters upon the subject with a mind free of prejudice. He has seen how, in his own time, the existence of the American Republic has affected the people of Central and South America, and how its influence has been exerted even across the ocean upon the nations of Continental Europe. He, therefore, of all others, should be capable of understanding how the Dutch Republic must have affected those heroic men in England and America who, in their newly

awakened intellectual life, were trying to break the shackles of civil and religious tyranny.

Writing the history of English Puritanism without any allusion to this influence is much like writing the early history of England without referring to the ideas brought in by the Norman conquerors, or a history of the Renaissance in Italy without mentioning the influence of the classic authors of Greece. But in the case of America and its Puritans even these comparisons are inadequate. Another illustration will, perhaps, be more apposite.

Let the reader imagine that Japan, instead of sending a few score of students to the United States, had sent over many thousand families, and had kept five or six thousand soldiers in our army for some forty years; and that during the same period a hundred thousand Americans had settled in Japan itself. Imagine, further, that at the end of the forty years a number of the Japanese settlers in America had started out to found a colony in some newly discovered land, and that there had been added to their ranks a large number of Americans and some twenty thousand other Japanese, some of whom had lived in America, and most of the others going from sections in which Americans had been living for many years. These colonists found a mighty state, whose people speak Japanese, but have almost no Japanese institutions, having established a republic, and copied their institutions mainly from the United States. The writer who after two centuries should sit down to compose a history of this new republic, and, omitting all reference to the United States,

credit these settlers with the invention of their un-Japanese institutions, would be simply following the example of the English, and most of the American, authors who have written of America and her institutions.

The foregoing suggestions as to the influence of Holland upon England and America may appear strange to persons who have been accustomed to regard the Hollanders as "stupid Dutchmen." Washington Irving burlesqued those who settled New York in a book which, although written in his boyish days, and in later years admitted by him to be a "coarse caricature," * fitted in with the English prejudice, and in some quarters has almost become accepted history. He depicted them as besotted with beer and narcotized by tobacco, ill-mannered, clownish, and objects only of ridicule. Many persons know nothing of them except from this travesty. What a contrast is presented by the facts! †

---

* "Life of Irving," by his Nephew, i. 183.

† In 1668, Colonel Francis Lovelace wrote from New York, in a private letter to King Charles II.: "I find some of these people have the breeding of courts, and I cannot conceive how such is acquired." Lamb's "History of the City of New York," i. 243. This letter was written shortly after the province had passed from the dominion of the Dutch West India Company, which had been its owners for half a century. The writer was an Englishman, the official representative of the Duke of York, the new proprietor. He had sailed up the Hudson to Esopus and Albany, remaining there a week; had explored Long Island; had been fêted in the infant capital; everywhere had seen the leading families; and after this examination wrote his letter to the king. He evidently had met different people from those bred in the fertile imagination of Irving.

Motley, the historian of the Netherlanders, himself a New-Englander, says that they were "the most energetic and quick-witted people of the world." Guicciardini, an Italian, who lived among them for forty years, said, in 1563, of their inventive faculty: "They have a special and happy talent for the ready invention of all sorts of machines, ingenious and suitable for facilitating, shortening, and despatching everything they do, even in the matter of cooking." Here is the Yankee of Europe. Taine, a Frenchman, fully acquainted with English institutions, says: "At this moment, 1609, Holland, on the sea and in the world, is what England was in the time of Napoleon. * * * Internally their government is as good as their external position is exalted. For the first time in the world, conscience is free and the rights of the citizens are respected. * * * In culture and instruction, as well as in the arts of organization and government, the Dutch are two centuries ahead of the rest of Europe."* It must now be remembered by the reader that when America was settled the Netherland Republic was a great power in Europe, with a population about as large as that of England, and one incomparably wealthier.

When all this was unthought of, and when original documents were inaccessible, historians were hardly blameworthy who ignored the influence of Holland upon England and America. But now no such excuse exists. To history the words of Joubert are particularly applicable: "Ignorance, which in matters of morals ex-

* "Art in the Netherlands," Durand's translation, pp. 166, 169, 171.

tenuates the crime, is itself in matters of literature a crime of the first order." Of this there can be no question when a writer has the material for obtaining a knowledge of the truth. Of course, if he has the knowledge and conceals it, he is outside the literary pale.

So much for the Dutch Puritans, and for the mode in which the historians of England and America have dealt with them. But their New England brethren have, in some respects, been equally unfortunate; not that they have been overlooked, but by some persons wofully misunderstood, if not wilfully misrepresented.

A leading literary journal of England, not many years ago, contained the following estimate of their character: "The savage brutality of the American Puritans, truthfully told, would afford one of the most significant and profitable lessons that history could teach. Champions of liberty, but merciless and unprincipled tyrants; fugitives from persecution, but the most senseless and reckless of persecutors; claimants of an enlightened religion, but the last upholders of the cruel and ignorant creed of the witch doctors; whining over the ferocity of the Indian, yet outdoing that ferocity a hundredfold; complaining of his treachery, yet, as their descendants have been to this day, treacherous, with a deliberate indifference to plighted faith such as the Indians have seldom shown—the ancestors of the heroes of the Revolutionary and of the Civil War might be held up as examples of the power of a Calvinistic religion and a bigoted republicanism to demoralize fair average specimens of a race which, under better influences, has shown itself the least

cruel, least treacherous, least tyrannical of the master races of the world." *

This is a strong indictment drawn by our British cousins, whose opinions some of us are accustomed to hold in high respect when other people feel their lash. But whatever its source, it, without question, only slightly exaggerates the estimate of the New England Puritans held by a large number of persons, both in Europe and in the United States. Whether this estimate is correct or not is a question forced on every one who cares for the truth of history; and from some points of view the question is to-day of practical importance.

One mode of meeting such charges is to deny, conceal, or gloss over the facts. How this is done can be seen by consulting some of the histories of New England, where many of the acts of intolerance and cruelty of the early Puritans are concealed, and others are softened down to a few trifling peccadillos.† Of course, when the writer of such books is confronted with the records, he has no refuge except in silence. This will not answer. We cannot, by closing our eyes, seal the records to the world. The story which they tell is very dark, especially as to the Quakers and the Indians. It is almost pitiable to see the attempt at its emasculation by writers who, while trying to praise, seem to feel

---

* The *Saturday Review*, Jan. 29th, 1881.

† All the histories are not, however, of this character. That of Hildreth is a notable exception, but it is little read. So, also, is "The Emancipation of Massachusetts," by Brooks Adams.

ashamed of their ancestors. I have sometimes tried to imagine to myself the effect produced among their descendants if these same ancestors could for a brief time return to earth, and be invested with their old authority. Think of them reading our histories, or at a New England dinner listening to speeches which ascribe to them the virtues which they abhorred, at a sacrifice of those which they held in special honor. Rude and uncivilized enough they were in many things, but they trained up their children to tell the truth and respect their parents.

Such a mode of dealing with the question is not good for the living, nor just to the dead. The truth is always best. In this case it will vindicate Puritanism if the whole of it is told.

The essence of the charge made by the *Saturday Review*—and this publication, always unfriendly to everything American, is quoted simply because it is the representative of a large class of critics—is that Puritanism was responsible for the actions of some of the New England settlers; that is to say, they were intolerant and sometimes cruel, because they were Calvinists in religion and republicans in politics. But investigation will show that in this, the vital, the enduring question of the controversy, the facts of history do not bear out the charge. In support of this position, there are two entirely distinct lines of argument, each of itself conclusive.

The first deals with the Puritans of Holland. They were, like their New England brethren, Calvinists and republicans. They sealed their devotion to the faith by carrying through a war unparalleled in the history of

arms, and founding a republic which endured for over two centuries. No one who knows their history can question their zeal as Calvinists or their love of liberty as men; but neither at home nor in America do we find them, with their long training in self-government, exhibiting the traits of character which are charged to Puritanism in New England. This alone ought to settle the question forever. It shows that, whatever else may have been the cause, the faults of our New England ancestors are not chargeable to their theological tenets or their love for republican institutions.

The second line of argument is broader in its scope. Admitting all that can be said in truth about the New England Puritans, yet it can be shown from the records of England that their actions were simply those of the Anglo-Saxon race; that, on the whole, its American representatives were far in advance of the men who remained at home, and much earlier freed themselves from superstition and intolerance. In other words, that it was not the Puritan, but the Englishman, who perpetrated the offences against humanity which want of knowledge charges to popular government and a Calvinistic faith.

Thanks to the progress made in historical investigation during the past quarter of a century, the proofs for the establishment of this position are overwhelmingly abundant. They will not be found in the ordinary school histories, nor collected in any English book. Still the records are there, and they are supplemented by the observations of keen-eyed foreigners from all quarters, whose notes and comments have been brought to light

in the last few years. In the general rewriting of European history, now in progress, founded not only on new material, but on new modes of investigation, some chapters in that of England will have to be revised, at least for the American reader. Enough, however, has been already done to dispose of the illusion of the "good old times" when the Puritan came into existence. The brilliant fictions woven by the poet and the novelist about the Elizabethan age may make the next period of stern reality, in which the Puritan came into authority, seem harsh and forbidding; but when the light of truth is turned upon those early days, and we see them as they appeared to men living at that time, we shall begin to understand what the modern world owes to English Puritanism, with all its excesses and shortcomings.

It is in this mode of treatment, not by concealing their faults, but by telling the whole truth, and comparing them with their countrymen at home, who had not even the excuse of their intense convictions, that we should seek the vindication of the New England Puritans. Were they alive, they would approve of this course themselves. They asked for no false reputations when on earth. They were great enough, and have done enough for humanity, to stand forth and, like Cromwell, be painted without the concealment of a defect or the exaggeration of a virtue. In some directions they had not travelled very far. They had but faint ideas of civil or religious liberty, as we understand them after two centuries and a half of substantial self-government, or even as they were understood among

the republicans of Holland, who had long before started on the journey. But we should remember that men must first get liberty for themselves before they think of it for others. The homeless man has little scope for hospitality. Broad conceptions of liberty come very slowly to maturity. These settlers sprang from a race which for generations had lived under the despotism of the Tudors and the Stuarts. Their first idea was to build a home for their own shelter, and to secure the rights whose value they had only begun to realize. While this work was going on there would naturally, save in rare and exceptional natures, be but little thought of others; but when self-protection was assured, when his own home was finished, the Puritan never sat down to selfish ease, regardless of the hungry and the houseless.

This work I have intended mainly as an introduction to American history, although it may also serve in some measure as an introduction to modern English history, in which Puritanism has played a leading part. My principal design has been to show the nature of the influences which shaped the character of the people of Holland and England when the early settlers of America left their homes, to trace the origin of the ideas and institutions which these settlers brought with them across the ocean, and to explain the mode in which they have worked into our present constitutional system.

In following out this scheme, an introductory chapter points out the present differences between England and the United States—differences of the most marked char-

acter, extending to a wide range of subjects of great importance. The subsequent chapters relate to the history of Holland and England, their comparative civilization when America was settled, the institutions which each country had developed, the growth of their Puritanism, and the influence exerted upon England and America by the Dutch Republic. In the chapters relating to England an attempt is also made, while tracing the development of Puritanism in that country, to show the origin of its peculiarities which have excited so much adverse criticism. These peculiarities are shown, in the light of modern research, to be due simply to the conditions under which it was developed among the English people. In the discussion of this subject, as I can foresee, the inherited illusions of some of my readers may be unpleasantly disturbed, although it is difficult for me personally to understand a reluctance to knowing the truth about one's ancestors. This perhaps arises from the fact that, while some of mine were among the Pilgrim Fathers, others came from a race the recent savagery of which is admitted with perfect frankness by all English writers. But New-Englanders, like Scotchmen, and like their English brethren, may take such pride in what their countrymen have accomplished since the days of the Stuarts that they can afford to do away with fiction. Knowing the truth, one can judge whether the world has retrograded or advanced with the development of liberal institutions, and perhaps can draw some useful lessons for the future.

It does not fall within the scope of the present work to follow the settlers of America into their new home,

except so far as to describe some of their leading institutions, and to show how the much-criticised treatment of the Baptists, the Quakers, and the witches by the Puritans of New England compared with that to which the same classes were subjected in the mother country. Hereafter, if the patience of the public be not exhausted, I may attempt to show what was accomplished directly for America by the men from republican Holland who settled the colony of New York.

In now closing this somewhat extended preface, a few words must be added in acknowledgment of the assistance which has been rendered me by others.

In the first place, to my many friends of the Century Club of New York, where a considerable part of my investigations have been carried on, my thanks are due for suggestions, references to books, and information on special subjects, which have all been of the greatest value. Apart from these general contributions, I am in this country chiefly indebted to the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Briggs, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York; Prof. C. C. Langdell, of the Harvard Law School; Prof. A. M. Wheeler, of Yale College; Mr. and Mrs. William C. Brownell, of New York — all of whom have read parts of my manuscript — and to the Rev. Henry U. Swinnerton, of Cherry Valley, who has read the whole; the latter four making many valuable suggestions. None of these scholars are responsible for the defects of my book or for any of my conclusions; but for their scholarly offices so generously extended I desire to express my grateful acknowledgments.

In another quarter my obligations are of a different

character. Since illness has interrupted my personal investigations in Holland, I have been compelled to do this work from across an ocean, relying entirely on foreign aid. This, however, has been so lavishly extended that probably I should have accomplished nothing more, perhaps even less, in attempting to carry on my further researches in person, unless I had settled down in the country for a residence of years. For this aid my thanks are in the first place due to my old classmate of thirty-one years ago at Union College, the Hon. Samuel R. Thayer, now the United States Minister at The Hague. Not only have he and his efficient private secretaries furnished me with copies of many valuable documents from the archives of the Netherlands which I felt confident existed there, and which never before had been given to the American public, but he has enlisted in my behalf some of the most distinguished scholars of the country.

These scholars, who have a microscopic acquaintance with the history of their own land which every student may well envy, have rendered me invaluable assistance in the solution of problems connected with their ancient republican institutions, some of which have disappeared in modern days. How much I am indebted to them only the historical investigator can appreciate who knows what it is to hunt for days or weeks through musty records or worm-eaten volumes often for a single fact. The kindness extended to me has not been exceptional, for the scholars of the Netherlands are world-famous for the liberality with which they impart their knowledge—a liberality of which every American who

has ever applied to them has had ample proof. Still, I appreciate it none the less. When I owe a debt to so many, it may perhaps seem invidious to make any distinction; yet it is but fair to say that my chief acknowledgments are due to the late Dr. M. F. A. G. Campbell, Librarian of the Royal Library at The Hague; Dr. P. J. Blok, Professor of History at the University of Groningen; and Dr. F. G. Slothouwer, Professor of History at the Latin School of Leeuwarden, in Friesland.

January, 1892.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

A new edition of this work having been called for, the author has made a few small changes in the original text, which have been kindly suggested by Mr. Justin Winsor, Librarian of Harvard University; Mr. Andrew S. Draper, late Superintendent of Public Instruction in New York; Mr. S. R. Van Campen, an American scholar, resident in London, engaged in Dutch researches; and Mr. Burton N. Harrison, of New York.

Cherry Valley, N. Y., *August*, 1892.

NOTE TO THIRD EDITION.

For this edition I have made a few slight changes, most of which have been suggested by kindly critics in this country and in Europe, to all of whom I desire to express my thanks. The corrections are mainly of a slight order, not affecting the general argument of the book.

CHERRY VALLEY, N. Y., *Dec. 7th*, 1892.

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION.

A fourth edition of this work has been called for earlier than the author expected. For this edition a few more corrections have been made, of the same character as those appearing in former editions. The work has now been six months before the public. It has been noticed or reviewed in about two hundred magazines and papers in America, Holland, and England—some few of its critics have differed from the author's conclusions, but it has been a source of gratification to him to find that they have pointed out no essential error in his narrative. For its cordial reception he wishes to express his warm thanks to the public.

CHERRY VALLEY, N. Y., *Jan. 10th*, 1893.

THE PURITAN

IN

HOLLAND, ENGLAND, AND AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

Most American authors, and all Englishmen who have written of America, set out with the theory that the people of the United States are an English race, and that their institutions, when not original, are derived from England. These assumptions underlie all American histories, and they have come to be so generally accepted that to question them seems almost to savor of temerity. Perhaps, however, the temerity is only in the seeming. Hans Christian Andersen, in one of his charming tales, describes a royal court all of whose members believed that the emperor was arrayed in priceless garments from a magic loom, until he showed himself unclothed in the public street, and a little urchin blabbed the truth. Then every one perceived that the magic garments had no existence except in their imaginations. And so, when men and nations reach the stage in their development where they use their own eyes instead of echoing the thoughts of others, popular delusions often vanish before a breath.

In history this process is rapidly going on. The discovery of new facts from year to year shatters the idols of centuries, rehabilitates injured reputations, and throws light on disputed or obscure questions; but, what is of greater importance, the people of this generation are getting out of leading-strings, are seeing with their own eyes, and thinking for themselves. Thus subjecting even old facts to an original examination, regardless of prejudice and untrammelled by convention, the history of all countries is assuming a new form. "Brains," says Machiavelli, "are of three generations—those that understand for themselves, those that understand when another shows them, and those that understand neither of themselves nor by the showing of another." The last, of course, are always hopeless, but the first class is rapidly increasing. To its members the history of America looked at only as an offshoot from England must always seem incomplete and full of contradictions. To reconcile these apparent contradictions, fill out the record, and show the growth of the republic as a consistent whole, two facts should be given their proper place—that the population of America has always been largely cosmopolitan, and that its institutions have been gathered from many quarters of the globe.

Of course, if these propositions are correct, we must change the point of view to which we have been accustomed in the study of our early history. If it is true that our people and institutions come largely from other lands than England, it is important to see how these foreign races developed in their homes, and of still greater moment to learn the history, character, and workings of the institutions which are un-English in their origin. This is the only philosophic mode of treating history, and it is the only way in which it can be made of value.

To begin with the settlement of Jamestown, or the landing of the *Mayflower*, is well enough if America is simply England transplanted across the sea. But if America is much more than a transplanted England, the case is very different. Then the neglect of the other nations which have contributed to its population and institutions leads to a result like that of writing a biography without referring to the subject's ancestors or describing his youth and education.

How the idea that the Americans are purely an English race has been developed is apparent at a glance. Englishmen, when in good humor, or "afraid we may do them a mischief," as Lowell says,* call us their kin across sea, American cousins, or children of the mother country, although always expressing surprise that the offspring bears so little resemblance to its fond parent.† On the other hand, Americans have done their part. Until a recent date, many of our writers seemed to think that England held the only stamp for literary as well as social reputation; and perhaps even now society has not a monopoly of the class whose members feel flattered at being mistaken for second-rate Englishmen. The mass of the people, however, have no such feeling. Independence has come, or at least is speedily coming, in thought as well as in political relations. This the future historian will notice as one of the most important results flowing from the great civil war, which first gave Americans assurance of the strength of the republic.

Looking back, after the lapse of centuries, we see the

---

* "Among My Books," p. 239.

† "The American Philistine, however, is certainly far more different from his English brothers than I had before supposed."—Matthew Arnold, after his first visit to America. *Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1885.

effects produced upon Greece by the defeat of the Persian invaders, upon England by the annihilation of the Spanish Armada, and upon Holland by the victory over Spain. The results in America of a gigantic struggle for national existence, carried to a successful termination, will be no less far-reaching. We see them already in the marvellous development of the industrial pursuits of the country, in literature, science, and art; and they will be still more marked in time. Not the least important, however—for it is connected with all the others—is the change of feeling in America regarding our relations to other countries, and especially to Great Britain.

A few years ago, although we professed to care nothing for foreign opinion, the author of an American book waited with bated breath until he heard what the English critics had to say about it, and our grandiloquent orators and editors never felt happy unless the traveller whom they patronized praised our "glorious institutions."* But to-day our American authors, artists, architects, scholars, and men of science no longer need to look abroad to secure a reputation. As for our institutions, they have stood the crucial test of war. It is to be hoped that we shall never undervalue their earnest criticism from any quarter, but the American has the feeling that in some respects he understands their nature better than a foreigner. Our revolution gave us political independence; perhaps our civil war was needed to give

* It was this feeling which led to the bitter resentment of the criticisms published by writers like Mrs. Trollope and Charles Dickens. Many of our people felt like lynching Mr. Dickens for his early remarks about America; but a recent English traveller, Sir Lepel Griffin, has said things much more severe. Yet of him few Americans have even heard, and those who have read his book merely smile and think him entitled to his opinions.

us intellectual independence as well. One thing is very clear: The time has passed for conjuring with the wand of British authority. America is no longer on her knees; she has risen, and begins to look around her. No wonder if she should now call in question some of the traditions about her pedigree.

For the average Englishman who thinks of the Americans as a pure English race there is great excuse. Of their country, until within the past few years, he knew comparatively nothing, except that the English language was spoken here, and that at one time some of the states were British colonies.* But with Americans the case is

* One notable exception should be made, however, in this connection. In a speech delivered in London on April 28th, 1887, Mr. Gladstone said: "The institutions and progress of the United States have always been subjects of great interest to me, ever since, many years ago, I studied the life of Washington. I became then aware, first, of the magnitude of the destiny reserved for Americans, and, second, of the fact that the period of the birth of the American States was of more interest than any other it was possible to study. Whenever a youth, desirous of studying political life, consults me respecting a course of study in the field of history, I always refer him to the early history of America."—*N. Y. Tribune*, April 27th, 1887. In a speech delivered at Chester, Oct. 26th, 1889, Mr. Gladstone urged the workingmen of England to study the history of the American Revolution. The system of government in America, he said, combined that love of freedom, respect for law, and desire for order which formed the surest elements of national excellence and greatness. It was no extravagance to say that, although there were only three million people in the thirteen states at the time of the Revolution, the group of statesmen that proceeded from them were a match for any in the whole history of the world, and were superior to those of any other one epoch.—*N. Y. Tribune*, Oct. 27th, 1889. Again, Mr. Gladstone said, a little later: "I incline to think that the future of America is of greater importance to Christendom at large than that of any other country."—*North American Review*, Dec., 1889.

quite different. Many of them have visited Upper Canada and Nova Scotia, which are settled by a race almost wholly British in its origin. No one can see these Canadians without being struck at once with the contrasts between them and the men he meets at home.* Still more of our people have within the past few years travelled in England. Certainly no intelligent American can remain there long, talk with peasant, farmer, and country squire, listen to the conversation in cars, hotels, and shops, experiment with a humorous story on a party of Englishmen, go beneath the mere surface of dress and language, and study the people as he does those of the Continent, and then believe that we are of the same race, except as members of the same Aryan division of the human family, with the same human nature.

Identity of language is a great bond of union, and so is community of literature. But these, and especially the latter, may induce very erroneous conclusions when we come to deal with historical questions. Accustomed to read few modern foreign books except those written by English authors, it was very natural for our fathers to think only of their English blood. They found in the pages of the poet and the novelist of England their own natures depicted, and thence, perhaps hastily, concluded that they were one people with the writers. The fact is that human nature is essentially the same all the world over. We are not Hebrews because the Proverbs of Solomon are so applicable to us, nor French nor German, because Montaigne and Goethe tell us how we feel and think. The present generation is reading a host of books written by foreigners, French, German, and Rus-

* So the people of Australia are purely English in manner, modes of thought, etc. See Froude's "Oceana."

sian, but everywhere we see a picture of the same human nature, if the books are true to life.

Let us now glance at some of the facts, remembering that there were twelve states in the original Union, exclusive of Massachusetts, the maker of our histories and school-books. In 1759, the Rev. Mr. Burnaby, an Englishman, visited America. Of the Northern colonies in general, he said that they "are composed of people of different religions and different languages."* In Pennsylvania he found the most enterprising people of the continent. These, he noticed, consisted of several nations, who spoke several languages—"they are aliens in some respects to Great Britain."† In New York City he found that half of the inhabitants were Dutch; of the population in general he remarked: "Being of different nations, different languages, and different religions, it is impossible to give them any precise or definite character." A century before, a traveller reported that eighteen languages were spoken on Manhattan Island. This was probably an exaggeration, but it had a broad basis of truth. How great was this original diversity of origin is shown in the fact first pointed out by Governor Horatio Seymour: "Nine men prominent in the early history of New York and of the Union represent the same number of nationalities. Schuyler was of Holland, Herkimer of German, Jay of French, Livingston of Scotch, Clinton of Irish, Morris of Welsh, and Hoffman of Swedish descent. Hamilton was born in one of the English West India islands, and Baron Steuben, who became a citizen of New York after the Revolutionary War, was a Prussian."‡

---

* "Burnaby's Travels," p. 201. † Idem, p. 109.

‡ "History and Topography of New York: a Lecture," by Horatio Seymour.

No one acquainted with the barest outlines of American history needs to be told about these men. Hamilton organized the government of the United States. He was the head of the Federalist party, and many persons think the greatest statesman that America has ever known. His influence on American thought and institutions was only equalled by that of Jefferson, who was the representative of Democracy almost pure and simple. These two men, more than all others, shaped the future of the United States; and yet the one, although a New-Yorker by adoption, was born of a Scotch father and a French mother, and the other, who was probably of Welsh and Scotch extraction, was French in all his feelings, having no English ideas.* Jefferson said, "Every man has two countries, his own and France;" and it was from the writers of France that he drew the principles on which his political theories were based.†

Of the other New-Yorkers un-English in their extraction, Jay was the first Chief Justice of the United States, Clinton was the great Northern founder of the Anti-

---

* Like most of the Revolutionary statesmen of Virginia, Jefferson came from what Lincoln has called the "plain people," and little is known with certainty about his pedigree. There is no proof, however, that he was of English descent, and the family traditions are that his paternal ancestor came from Wales. In many of his characteristics he was certainly more of a Celt than an Anglo-Saxon. His mother was a Randolph, of a family claiming to be descended from the Scotch Earls of Murray. Parton's "Life of Jefferson;" Randall's "Life of Jefferson," i. 6, 7.

† In view of these facts, one perhaps can understand why it was that, while Englishmen knew nothing of America, the first foreigner to attempt a criticism of its institutions was the Frenchman De Tocqueville.

Federalist (now the Democratic) party; while the Morrises and Livingstons played leading parts in American affairs. These were the men who framed the Constitution of New York, declared by John Adams to be excellent over all others. It is their state which first introduced the legal reforms which have revolutionized the procedure and methods of jurisprudence of America and England.

But it was not New York alone that was affected by this intermixture of blood. Pennsylvania, which contributed largely to American institutions, Delaware, and New Jersey were settled by men of diverse nationalities, so that at the outbreak of the Revolution probably only a minority of their inhabitants were of English origin.* In addition, all through the other colonies were scattered large numbers of Scotch-Irish, French Huguenots, Germans, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and Swedes, counted as English, but essentially modifying the mass of the population and the national type.†

English travellers constantly express surprise that the English race in America, as they are pleased to call us, should be so different from the same race at home. Here

---

* "Life of Gouverneur Morris," by Theodore Roosevelt, p. 11.

† Only the most careful study will enable one to approximate to any correct figures on this subject. In regard to the Huguenots, the work has been begun in an admirable history by Baird of the "Huguenot Emigration to America," which unfortunately death has interrupted. The results of similar investigations as to other nationalities would probably surprise the public. Especially is this the case as to the Scotch-Irish, whose history in America has never been attempted. In the last chapter of this work I shall have something to say about these men, showing what multitudes of them flocked through Pennsylvania and the Southern colonies before the Revolution, and what an important influence they exerted upon the fortunes of their adopted country.

in America the people, looking at political and social questions, "see straight and think clear," according to Matthew Arnold, while on the other side of the Atlantic, as he says, they certainly do not. This surprise will remain just so long as the delusion exists that the Americans are of pure English descent, and the influence of other nations upon them continues to be overlooked. Let any reader apply the test, and inquire among his acquaintances. He will probably find very few who, being able to trace their ancestry back on its different sides for several generations, are of unmixed stock. English blood most of them will have, and they ought to prize it for its pluck and sturdy manliness; but crossing this will be found, in almost every case, the blood of other nations with qualities that the English have never had.*

* A great modern thinker thus expresses his opinion as to the ultimate effect upon America of this intermingling of nationalities, now going on more rapidly than ever: "From biological truths it may be inferred that the eventual mixture of the allied varieties of the Aryan race forming the population will produce a finer type of man than has hitherto existed, and a type of man more plastic, more adaptable, more capable of undergoing the modifications needed for complete social life. I think that whatever difficulties they may have to surmount, and whatever tribulations they may have to pass through, the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known."—"Herbert Spencer in America," p. 19. I trust that I may be pardoned for saying here, once for all, that my quotations like those from Mr. Gladstone and Herbert Spencer are not made for the purpose of exciting the vanity of a nation which in so many departments has as yet little to be proud of, but simply to show that even intelligent English observers notice the marked difference between the people of America and those of the mother country. The sober-minded reader will draw his conclusions from the facts.

Turning now from the question of race to that of institutions, a subject which some may think much more important, we reach a simpler field. Here is no room for conjecture or mere opinion. We have the institutions of the two countries before us; they can be compared by any one acquainted with them both, and the result speaks for itself. Instead of those of the United States being derived from England, it is a curious fact that, while we have in the main English social customs and traits of character, we have scarcely a legal or political institution of importance which is of English origin, and but few which have come to us by the way of England.

The influence of institutions upon national character has been, perhaps, exaggerated by some writers; it certainly has been underestimated by others. The French are inclined to the exaggeration, the English to the underestimate. Of course institutions should be adapted to a people, just as a school should be adapted to a scholar's capacity. A tribe of savages would be benefited as little by a system of government borrowed from a civilized nation as a little child would be benefited by a post-graduate course at a college. All this is true enough, and in this is summed up much of what is meant when institutions are spoken of as a growth. But, on the other hand, as a child may develop into a scholar in one school who would have remained a dunce in another, simply on account of the difference in his teachers, so a people may make progress under one set of institutions, while with another set they would remain stationary.

There were no horses upon the American continent until they were introduced by the Europeans. The horse, we are told, is an evolution, and perhaps in time might have been evolved in America, but his introduc-

tion certainly has aided the development of the country. Institutions, likewise, are growths and not creations; but when grown they bear transplanting, and will thrive if the soil is fertile and the climate genial. Thus transplanted, they become most important factors in the evolution of society.*

Before considering the subject of American institutions, there is one English institution of the greatest importance, utterly unknown in the United States, to which a few words may be well devoted. This is the State Church. To Americans familiar with the history and literature of England, this subject is so well known

---

* Matthew Arnold was one of the English scholars who had been accustomed to undervalue the influence of institutions. A visit to America in 1884 modified his opinions. Upon returning home he wrote as follows: "I suppose I am not by nature disposed to think so much as most people do of institutions. The Americans think and talk very much of their 'institutions.' I am by nature inclined to call all this sort of thing machinery, and to regard rather men and their characters. But the more I saw of America the more I found myself led to treat 'institutions' with increased respect. Until I went to the United States, I had never seen a people with institutions which seemed expressly and thoroughly suited to it. I had not properly appreciated the benefits proceeding from this cause."—"Last Words about America," *Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1885. Matthew Arnold, before coming to America, did not apparently share the views of his illustrious father. The latter says: "The immense variety of history makes it very possible for different persons to study it with different objects. But the great object, as I cannot but think, is that which most nearly touches the inner life of civilized man—namely, the vicissitudes of institutions, social, political, and religious."—"Lectures on Modern History," Lecture III. William C. Brownell, in his "French Traits," has an instructive chapter on Democracy, in which he shows the importance attached by Frenchmen to the subject of institutions. "French Traits," Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889.

that many persons are inclined to overlook the importance of such an establishment in one country and of its absence from the other; and yet there is no single institution in England which in the last three centuries has exerted a greater influence in moulding the national character and in shaping the national thought than the Established Church, while nothing, perhaps, has been so important to the United States as the absence of this institution.

In England the Church is an adjunct of the State. It is supported by a tax, levied on every one, whether believing in its doctrines and attending its services or not. Its prelates are appointed by the crown, under the form of an election, which is, however, nothing but a form. Its ministers are not selected by their congregations, but are appointed by the State, or by private individuals who have inherited or purchased this privilege, and who may be atheists or pagans. The influence of this organization, as shown in English history, is too familiar to need more than a bare suggestion. During the reigns of Elizabeth and the Stuarts it was little but the handmaid of tyranny. Ever since that time it has been the consistent opponent of almost every reform. This is natural enough, for in England reforms have always been forced on a reluctant State, of whose machinery the Church has formed an important part. It has always been the bulwark of the aristocracy; so that if one goes, the other will probably go with it. This, too, is natural enough, for its ministers depend for their bread upon the upper classes. Its organization extends over every square mile of English soil; its revenues are enormous — some of its ministers enjoying princely incomes — and yet no Protestant Christian body has done so little, in comparison with its wealth and

numbers, for the cause of religion or morality.* In late years it seems in some quarters to have developed a new spirit, so that its future is uncertain, but nothing can change the record of the past.

This is not the place to discuss the question whether in all these matters the influence of the State Church of England has been well or ill directed. It has been claimed that it is an evil to educate the common people, or give them too much religious instruction. Such was

---

* Writing in 1850, one of the best informed of English observers said: "Here, where the aristocracy is richer and more powerful than that of any other country in the world, the poor are more depressed, more pauperized, more numerous in comparison to the other classes, more irreligious, and very much worse educated than the poor of any other European nation, solely excepting Russia, Turkey, South Italy, Portugal, and Spain."—"Kay's Social Condition of the English People," Amer. ed. p. 323. If any reader thinks that I have overcolored any statement in this chapter or elsewhere, regarding the condition of the poor in England, I ask him to consult this book. Mr. Joseph Kay was sent out by the Senate of Cambridge University to examine the comparative social condition of the poorer classes in the different countries of Europe. In 1850 he gave to the world the results of his investigations, extending over several years, in a work entitled "The Social Condition and Education of the People of England." The chapters on England, which have been reprinted separately in the United States, are made up from personal observations and official reports, and give evidence of an earnest desire on the part of the author to impress his countrymen with the gravity of their situation. The preface to the American edition of 1863 well says of these chapters: "They are a warning to us, and hence useful, although abounding in facts that are not agreeable, and of a description that needs to be read only by men who have duties at the polls, and those few women who take an active part in raising or guarding our various institutions." See also John Foster's essay on "Popular Ignorance," and Booth's "In Darkest England," published in 1890.

the theory of Queen Elizabeth and her successors. It may be that the political reforms opposed by the State Church were mistaken measures and will ultimately prove disastrous. It may have been wise to exclude Jews and Catholics from office, and to prevent any one from obtaining a liberal education at the great universities unless he professed the faith of the State. It may be that a better class of ministers is obtained under the English system of appointment, where the office is said sometimes to be sold to the highest bidder, than under a system which permits the congregations to select their own ministers. All these claims may be well or ill founded; the system may be the best or the worst ever devised by man, but it certainly is the most important of English institutions, except, perhaps, the aristocracy, to which it is allied, and it is unknown in the United States.

Several of the American colonies, following the example of England, established churches supported by the State. But the Revolution, which severed the relations between the colonies and the mother country, soon put an end to these establishments. Here New York took the lead. In its first Constitution, adopted in 1777, a provision was inserted repealing and abrogating all such parts of the common law and all such statutes as could "be construed to establish or maintain any particular denomination of Christians or their ministers."* Virginia followed in 1785, and at later dates all the other old states in which the Church had been established did the same, except New Hampshire, concluding with Connecticut in 1818 and Massachusetts in 1833.† The new states which have

* Constitution of 1777, sec. 35.

† Schaff's "Church and State in the United States," p. 46. Some

joined the Union since the adoption of the Federal Constitution have, without exception, followed the example of New York, and have by constitutional provision placed a complete separation between Church and State.*

Here then, in the most important domain, that of religion, we find the greatest possible difference between the two countries, a difference which may furnish much food for thought to those who believe that America has English institutions. But when we pass to political matters, the differences are no less important and far-reaching.

Beginning at the bottom, we find that our whole political system is founded on a basis entirely different from that of the "mother country." The theory of all our institutions is summed up in the words of the Declaration of Independence, "All men are created equal." This has been called a "glittering generality." So it is, and so is the refulgent atmosphere in which we live, and the crystal ocean which girds the globe. Yet what air and water are to man, human equality is to the life of the republic. We need not the authority of Sir Henry Maine † for the statement that this doctrine comes from Roman jurisprudence, that it is not English, and that it is and ever has been unknown to English law, where the members of the noble order have always enjoyed peculiar privileges, extending even to the courts of justice. No one could persuade the Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India that any of her subjects is by

---

of the colonies had no established Church, and so seemed to require no constitutional provision upon the subject.

* See Poore's "Charters and Constitutions of the United States."

† Maine's "Ancient Law," p. 91. "All men are equal," the most distinctive expression of the doctrine of Roman law. "The Early History of Institutions," Sir Henry Maine (Henry Holt, New York, 1888), p. 330.

birth her equal. Coming down the list to the pettiest baronet, the same feeling exists, and it is not confined to the class which claims superiority. The lower orders, as they call them—and this is, perhaps, the most demoralizing feature of the system—share the sentiment, and look up to an earl and duke as a good Catholic looks up to a patron saint. So strange does all this caste spirit seem to an American that it is almost incomprehensible. It is one of the last things which travellers appreciate, but until they do so they will understand little of the English people, their institutions, or their history.*

Ascending now from foundation to superstructure, we find as radical a contrast. The United States and all the separate states have written constitutions. The importance of these formal written instruments all Americans appreciate, and even Englishmen are beginning to see their value. By them the powers of government are distributed among the executive and legislative departments, while above all sits the judiciary, not only to keep each department to its proper functions, but also to guard the rights of each individual citizen or stranger. These constitutions represent the will of the people, are superior to all congresses or legislatures, and can only be altered by the people, in such modes, as to time and majorities, as guarantee deliberation and a widespread settled feeling of a necessity for change.†

---

* See "Aristocracy in England," by Adam Badeau, 1886, for a full study of this subject; Taine's "Notes on England;" Emerson's "English Traits," pp. 185, 305, ed. 1857. Says Matthew Arnold, "Inequality is our bane. * * * Aristocracy now sets up in our country a false ideal, which materializes our upper class, vulgarizes our middle class, brutalizes our lower class."—*Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1885, p. 233.

† No change can be made in the Constitution of the United

Of all this England knows nothing. Its so-called Constitution is a thing of tradition, sentiment, theory, abstraction, anything except organic, supreme, settled law. What is constitutional to-day, to-morrow may become unconstitutional by the mere fiat of the British Parliament, which, it has been said, can do anything except make a man a woman, or a woman a man. The courts construe the laws, but can neither protect one department of the government against another, nor the individual against the tyranny of the majority.*

States until proposed by two thirds of both houses of Congress, and ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the states. In New York a constitutional amendment has to pass through two legislatures, and then be ratified by a popular vote.

* "Parliament is, from a merely legal point of view, the absolute sovereign of the British Empire."—"The Law of the Constitution," Dicey, p. 354. "In spite of appearances," said Mr. Frederic Harrison, on the 1st of January, 1886, "and conventional formulas, habits, and fictions to the contrary, the House of Commons represents the most absolute autocracy ever set up by a great government since the French Revolution. Government here is now simply a committee of that huge democratic club, the House of Commons, without any of the reserves of power in the other parts of the Constitution which are found in the constitutions of France and America." Quoted in "French and English," by Hamerton, *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept., 1886, p. 321. "The Constitution, being unwritten, provides no special safeguard against revolutionary reforms like those in America and France."—Idem, p. 324. Says another recent English writer: "Our glorious Constitution, reduced to its simplest elements, consists merely of one unwritten article. If it were written, it would run: 'The majority of the English electoral body, having proved themselves to be a majority after a fierce electoral fight, in which every personal ambition, every selfish interest, and every malignant passion has been let loose, may do exactly what they like, without let or hindrance, with the organization of English society and with the resources of the British Empire.'"—*National Review*, Sept., 1886, p. 65.

Here is a fundamental difference at the outset. Now let us look at particulars. The United States has a real executive, who is commander-in-chief of the armies, appoints judges and subordinate executive officers with the approval of the Senate, has a substantial veto power, and holds office by election for a fixed term. England has two executives: one an hereditary figure-head, who holds levees, lays corner-stones, and leads. or is supposed to lead, society, being the supreme arbiter in questions of official etiquette; the other is a committee of the House of Commons, called a Cabinet, which exercises all real executive power, although unauthorized by statute, without any check on its authority, but also without any settled term of office, being subject to be swept away at any moment by a gust of popular passion.

Each country has two legislative houses, but the resemblance goes no further. The upper house in England, in which members keep their seats for life, simply represents the aristocracy, which means land, and the Church, which means religious caste in politics. In the United States the Senate represents the separate states, each one, large or small, having an equal voice, while one third of its members changes each two years. In England the upper house has no substantive power, except that of obstruction, fitfully and feebly exercised under the terror of annihilation. In the United States the Senate is a real body with authority, helping to make laws and serving as a check on the executive. Its confirmation is necessary to the appointment of judges and all executive officers, except those of the lowest class, while no treaty is valid without its approbation. Again, it must unite with the House of Representatives, before the President can make war or peace. None of these powers belong to the House of Lords. They are

all exercised by the Cabinet, a committee which is responsible only to the passions and prejudices of the House of Commons. No wonder that Lord Salisbury said, in a recent speech: "The Americans, as you know, have a Senate. I wish we could institute it in this country. Marvellous in efficiency and strength." *

Our House of Representatives is composed of members elected for two years, all of whom are paid. In England the members of the House of Commons receive no salaries, so that, unless supported, as in the case of some Irish members, by voluntary contributions, only the rich are really eligible to office; and they may serve for a week or seven years, as the Cabinet shall determine, since it may order a new election at any time.

Above all, in America, as I have said, above President, Senate, and House of Representatives sits the Supreme Court to see that the Constitution, the ultimate organic will of the people, is preserved intact. Its judges are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, but they hold office for life or good behavior.†

---

* Of it Matthew Arnold remarks: "The United States Senate is perhaps of all the institutions of that country the most happily devised, the most successful in its workings." Goldwin Smith describes it as "first in average intelligence among all the political assemblies in the world." *Nineteenth Century*, June, 1888, p. 889.

† Lord Salisbury, in a speech at Edinburgh on Nov. 23d, 1882, thus describes it: "I confess I do not often envy the United States, but there is one feature in their institutions which appears to me the subject of the greatest envy, their magnificent institution of a Supreme Court. In the United States, if Parliament passes any measure inconsistent with the Constitution of the country, there exists a court which will negative it at once, and that gives a stability to the institutions of the country which, under the system of vague and mysterious promises here, we look for in vain." Quoted "Carnegie's Triumphant Democracy," p. 369. Lord Salisbury evidently

These features make up the peculiarities of the American Federal system and differentiate it from other forms of government. All nations have an executive of some kind, most of them have judges and legislative bodies, so that in these general outlines there is nothing on which to base a theory of English origin. The question is whether our peculiar institutions, those distinctive of America, are derived from the "mother country." Of course, Englishmen knew nothing about the peculiarities of our Constitution, until, within the past few years, when they saw America looming up as an agricultural and manufacturing rival. Then a few of them began to look across the sea. Still later, greater attention has been given to the subject by Ireland's demand for Home Rule, based on something like the relations of our states to the general government.

Assuming that our Federal institutions are English, it is quite remarkable to see how unfamiliar they appear to the statesmen and writers of their home, now that at length they have attracted notice. How a Tory Prime Minister regards the more important ones we have already seen. Mr. Gladstone goes even further and says: "The American Constitution is, as far as I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." *

---

did not know how constitutional questions are brought before our Supreme Court; but had he known, his admiration probably would have been increased.

* Bryce, a writer on the English Constitution, says: "The plain truth is, that educated Englishmen are slowly learning that the American Republic affords the best example of a conservative democracy; and, now that England is becoming democratic, respectable Englishmen are beginning to consider whether the Constitution of the United States may not afford means by which, under new democratic

English writers who have looked into the institutions of America have naturally had their attention drawn to the Constitution of the United States, which deals only with national affairs. Seeing this instrument in all its completeness, and knowing little of the prior history of the separate states, they seem to conclude, as Mr. Gladstone did, that it was struck off in 1787 by the brains of the few men who formed the convention at which it was put in shape. Their work was a great one, but the American knows that the United States had been living under state constitutions for over ten years prior to the Union, and that many of the salient features of the Federal Constitution were not novel. For their history and origin we must go far back of the immortal convention of 1787.

The Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1787, but eleven years before that date the Federal Congress recommended to the thirteen colonies that they should proceed to form separate state constitutions. This was done by all of the thirteen, except Rhode Island and Connecticut, which preferred, for many years, to live under the form of government established by their colonial charters. To any one who desires to study the character and the development of American institutions these state constitutions, with their subsequent amendments, are, in some respects, much more important than the Federal Constitution. All of them have been mate-

---

powers, may be preserved the political conservatism dear and habitual to the governing class of England." These are the opinions of leading Englishmen, and they might be multiplied indefinitely. See Carnegie's "Triumphant Democracy," p. 501, etc. I wish here to make a general acknowledgment of the liberal use made of the valuable facts relating to this subject, and to some others, collected by Mr. Carnegie.

rially modified since their first adoption; in some the changes have been revolutionary, in all the tendency of the changes has been towards a common form approaching a democratic model.

At the outset, however, the contrast between their different provisions was very marked. The original instruments were framed by bodies of men of different nationalities, living at great distances apart from each other, and with varying views, the results of study, experience, or inherited traits of character, as to the form of government and as to the institutions which were best fitted to their respective wants. Some provided for a State Church as in England, others prohibited its establishment; some gave religious liberty to all, others restricted it to Protestant believers in the Bible; some provided for voting by ballot, others for the English system of voting *vivâ voce;* some provided for two legislative houses, others for only one; some gave the governors great power, others hampered them with councils; some carried provisions for the freedom of the press beyond anything ever known in England, others were satisfied with English guarantees; some abolished primogeniture, others retained it undisturbed; some provided for free schools, others left that subject to the Legislature; some gave to prisoners accused of crime the privilege of appearing by counsel, others remitted them to the tender mercies of the common law; some denounced the sanguinary criminal code of England, others made no allusion to the subject.

These are but specimens of provisions in the original state constitutions, which show how divergent were the views of the men who framed these instruments upon many subjects of the first importance. Some of these provisions, as we shall see hereafter, were incorporated

into the Federal Constitution, but others, having no relation to national affairs, have been left to bear fruit in different circles. But even these constitutions form but a small part of the evidence to be examined by one who wishes to discover the origin of American institutions. Back of them will be found a body of laws and customs, many of them entirely un-English in their character, which, for more than a century before the Declaration of Independence, moulded the character of the people who then became a nation.

If historians had devoted to the investigation of these subjects one tithe of the labor which has been given to tracing the influence of the Celts, the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons, or the Normans on Great Britain, we should hear little of the surprise now expressed at the fact that America differs so much from the mother country.

Returning now to our general subject, and passing from those matters of organization which relate particularly to the structure and machinery of the general government, let us glance at a broader field and consider some more important institutions, which may be likened to the material of which the building is constructed. It will hardly be disputed that the laws and customs which, after those establishing religious and political equality, are most distinctive in the American system relate to the ownership of land, popular education, and local self-government. The relative importance of these three subjects may be questioned by different thinkers, but probably all will agree as to their combined influence. Taking them up in the order named, the question at present to be considered is how far America has, in these matters, patterned after England.

First, then, as to land.* In England about half of the land is owned by one hundred and fifty persons. In Scotland half is owned by some seventy-five persons, while thirty-five own half of Ireland. Taking all Great Britain together, about four fifths of the profitable soil is owned by seven thousand individuals, and the other fifth by about one hundred thousand.† All the land of the United Kingdom amounts to about 77,000,000 acres; of these some 46,000,000 are under cultivation, and the remainder is unproductive. Yet Great Britain imports half of her grain, while about one twentieth of her population are paupers.‡ Were the great parks which are now kept for purposes of luxury or mere ostentation, and the vast uncultivated wastes which now only preserve game or serve as sheep pastures, divided up among little proprietors who would make every rood of ground available, England would hear much less of her labor question. As it is, however, everything for centuries has tended in the opposite direction.

First stands the law of primogeniture, under which, in case of intestacy, all the real estate goes to the oldest

---

* "The fact is," says a writer in the *British Quarterly Review*, "that the mode in which property, and especially land, is distributed has the chief influence in determining the political and social character of the people." Again he remarks: "Indeed, it may almost be said that land and aristocracy are in England convertible terms." *British Quarterly Review*, April, 1886, p. 279.

† "Free Land," by Arthur Arnold (1880), cited Gneist's "History of the English Constitution," transl. London, 1886, ii. 376; also "France and Hereditary Monarchy," by John Bigelow, 1871, p. 53.

‡ "Our National Resources, and How they are Wasted," William Hoyle, pp. 40, 42; "Home Politics," Daniel Grant, p. 8, quoted by Bigelow, pp. 31–35; "In Darkest England," by William Booth.

male heir, thus building up great families. Next stands the system relating to the transfer of land among the living, which clogs its alienation and renders its purchase by the poor almost impossible.

Every American knows how simple is our system of recording deeds and mortgages. Under it, in ordinary cases, any man of average intelligence can search his own title and make out his own conveyance, or can have it done in the country for about five dollars; for, unless a deed or mortgage is recorded in the proper office of the county, it is of no avail against the later *bona-fide* instrument of an innocent party duly put on record. In England, except in some small sections of the country where this system has been lately introduced, nothing of this kind exists. All title-deeds are kept by the owner; and unless a careful examination is made by a lawyer, there is no security for a purchaser whatever. In no other civilized country of the world do sales and mortgages of land habitually take so long a time to transact, and nowhere else are the charges in the case of small properties so great.*

Time and time again, from the days of Cromwell down, the attempt has been made to introduce the recording system which prevails in the United States and in most of the countries of the Continent, but always without success. Parliamentary committees have recommended it, upon the ground that it would give increased security, and facilitate, by cheapening, the transfer of land. But there lay potent reasons for its rejection. The large proprietors, representing the aristocratic element of society, have desired that the mode of acquir-

* *Westminster Review*, July, 1886, p. 80. The lowest legal charge is about thirty dollars.

ing land should be neither easy nor cheap. Land is for aristocrats, and not for the common people. The result is that the great class of yeomen, the men who in bygone centuries gave England her greatness, has almost entirely disappeared.* In its place has grown up a race of peasants, well-nigh the most ignorant and brutalized among the so-called civilized peoples of the globe.

Not content with refusing to sell land to the poor, and making its transfer difficult and expensive, the ruling classes have gone one step further. Formerly a large part of the soil of England was owned in common, each village or community holding its great tract open to all the inhabitants for purposes of pasturage. But since the beginning of the last century, 9,000,000 acres of these common lands, more than one eighth of the whole soil of Great Britain, have been taken possession of by private individuals and enclosed under acts of Parliament.† It was in reference to this wholesale robbery of the poor that the well-known lines were written:

> "The law locks up the man or woman
> Who steals the goose from off the common,
> But lets the greater villain loose
> Who steals the common off the goose."

In view of these facts, we can appreciate the words of one of England's keenest observers in speaking of the kaleidoscopic constitutions of France: "It does not require any special clearness of vision to perceive that so far from having closed the era of great changes, Great Britain and Ireland have only entered on it."‡

---

* "Pauperism, its Causes and Remedies," Prof. Fawcett, p. 208.

† Prof. Thorold Rogers, *Time*, March, 1890.

‡ Philip Gilbert Hamerton, *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept., 1886, p. 322.

One of these days England may awake to reap the whirlwind. She is now the only Teutonic nation, and perhaps the only civilized society in existence, in which the bulk of the land under cultivation is not owned by small proprietors.* To her laboring classes she is giving not land, but the spelling-book and the ballot. Speaking of the arms of a slave state, which represented a negro asleep upon a cotton bale, Wendell Phillips once asked, "But what will the people do when the negro wakes up?" Our cousins across the sea can take a similar question to heart. From time to time the English public are aroused to an appreciation of the filth and misery which pervade the dwellings of their poor. Then men rush into print with their various nostrums, emigration, vast schemes of private benevolence, new models for cottages, and the like; but it seldom occurs to any of them to suggest a change in their land laws by which the poor man might own his dwelling. Nothing, however, is so conducive to the self-respect, without which all sanitary regulations are powerless, as the possession of one's habitation.†

Turn now from England to America, and what a dif-

See also Gneist, "Hist. of English Constitution," ii. 452. Matthew Arnold says of the nobility and the property question: "One would wish, if one sets about wishing, for the extinction of titles after the death of the holders, and for the dispersion of property by a stringent law of bequest."—*Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1885, p. 234.

* *British Quarterly Review*, April, 1886.

† "The large domains are growing larger; the great estates are absorbing the small freeholds. In 1786, the soil of England was owned by 250,000 corporations and proprietors."—Emerson's "English Traits," p. 184. A century earlier the number of those who farmed their own land was greater than the number of those who farmed the land of others. Macaulay, vol. i. chap. iii.

ferent picture is presented! The census of 1880 shows that the farms in the United States number over four millions, of which only about twenty-five thousand contain more than a thousand acres. Of the whole number nearly three fourths are worked by the owners, and of the remainder, the larger part are worked on shares. In 1850, before slavery was abolished, the farms numbered only about a million and a half, and they averaged two hundred and three acres each. In 1880, the average had sunk to one hundred and thirty-four acres, so that while the amount of cultivated land is largely on the increase, the process of subdivision is still more rapid. Practical experience here, as well as elsewhere, shows that small tracts of land are worked more economically than large ones, and are most productive when cultivated by the owner. The above figures take no account of mere city or village lots for building purposes. The number of these is very large, for, as the American knows, the laborer, except in the large cities, usually owns his own dwelling, and thus is a proprietor of the soil. The ownership of land always makes a man conservative. When it is generally divided, as in the United States, and where, under a liberal Homestead Law, any one can obtain a farm by actually putting it under cultivation, there will be found little room for theories of spoliation.*

* The census of 1890 shows only about 73,000 paupers in the poor-houses of the United States, out of a population of over 62,000,000, a relative decrease since 1880. About 6000 of those are colored, and of the whites three fifths are foreign-born or of foreign parentage. Of the poor permanently supported in their own houses or in private families, only some 24,000 are given, but in this case the returns do not pretend to even approximate correctness. Census Bulletin No. 90, July 8, 1891.

Such is the difference between England and America as to the distribution of land. Speaking of this subject, Daniel Webster summed up the case in his great speech at Plymouth, when he said of the New England settlers that "the character of their political institutions was determined by the fundamental laws respecting property." These laws, he said, provided for the equal division of the estate of an intestate among his children, while the establishment of public registration and the simplicity of our forms of conveyance have facilitated the change of real estate among the living.

Next comes the subject of popular education. This is, perhaps, more important than any question of the distribution of property. "Give light, and the darkness will dispel itself." Give education, and everything else will right itself in time. Still, some of the nations of the Old World may discover to their cost that unless other reforms go with the education of the masses, the righting process will seem like the first breaking of light over chaos.

The history of popular education in America is a familiar story. All the early settlers of New England paid great attention to instructing their children; first at home, or in the ministers' houses, and then in public schools. In 1647, the Massachusetts Colony passed a law providing that every township of fifty householders should appoint a schoolmaster to teach the children to read and write; and that his wages should be paid by the parents, or the public at large, according to the decision of the majority of the inhabitants. By 1665, every town in Massachusetts had a common school, and, if it contained over one hundred inhabitants, a grammar school. The other New England colonies followed in the wake of Massachusetts. In Connecticut every

town that did not keep a school for three months in the year was liable to a fine. Meantime the Dutch had established free schools in New York. This was the beginning of the educational system of the United States.

When the Puritan spirit began to decline there was a falling-off in the schools and an increase of illiteracy; but the love of learning never died out, and the free schools never were abandoned. At the close of the Revolution there was donated to the Union the vast domain north of the Ohio and west of the Alleghany Mountains, New York leading off in this generous cession.* In 1785, Congress passed an act reserving for educational purposes the sixteenth section of each township in this public territory. The policy then established has been followed in regard to all subsequent acquisitions, and in 1858 an additional section was granted by the government.† Up to the present time these grants aggregate over seventy-eight million acres, a territory larger than the whole of Great Britain and Ireland combined. In 1880, the United States spent eighty-two and a half million dollars on her common public schools, which were estimated to number one hundred and seventy-seven thousand, and in 1889 the expenditure had risen to over a hundred and thirty millions, while the schools had increased to two hundred and sixteen thousand. The census of 1880 showed that in the Northern States only five per cent. of the native population were unable to read and write.

Now, does any one imagine that America is indebted to England for its free-school system or general scheme

---

* *Magazine of American History*, March, 1888, p. 200.

† Each township contains thirty-six sections, one mile square. The allotment for educational purposes is therefore, since 1858, one eighteenth of the national domain. Census Bulletin No. 53, 1891.

for the education of the masses? Let us see. While New York was settled by Hollanders, and New England, as we shall see hereafter, largely by Puritans from England tinctured with Dutch ideas, Virginia had a different class of colonists. It is absurd to speak of them as of a better blood than the settlers in the North, for the latter came of the best old Anglo-Saxon stock, and they were made up of the most intelligent as well as the most sturdy and virtuous of their race. But Virginia was settled from a different class of the community. Her colonists, when not convicts or indented servants, were mostly average Englishmen of the Established Church, and, like the average Englishmen, opposed to all innovations in Church or State. So it came about that, in 1671, Sir William Berkeley, the Governor of Virginia, could write to England: "I thank God there are no free schools or printing, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years. For learning has brought heresy, and disobedience, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!" There spoke simply the typical English Tory, and the type was to remain unchanged in England for two hundred years to come.

Now turn to the mother country itself, and look at her record. During the reign of Edward VI., some grammar schools — we should now, perhaps, call them Latin or high schools — eighteen for the whole kingdom, were established by the reformers of his government. At various times a few more were added by private individuals. One of these rare schools, founded at Stratford-on-Avon by a native of that town who had gone up to London and become Lord Mayor, bore the name of William Shakespeare on its rolls. But for the good fortune of his townsman he might have died mute and

inglorious. These were purely charitable institutions where learning, such as it was, was doled out as an alms. The government did nothing further in the cause of education for nearly three centuries, until the year 1832, when Parliament made for this object the munificent appropriation of twenty thousand pounds. This was the first recognition in England of the principle that the State owes any duty to its children. In 1839, the annual grant was raised to thirty thousand, and then was increased from time to time until 1869, when it amounted to half a million pounds, about one fifth as much as the sum spent annually by the State of New York alone. This money was used not to found or support free schools, but to aid those of a voluntary character. At these state-aided schools about one million three hundred thousand children were instructed, two millions more were receiving no education at all, and another million were being taught at private adventure schools, where the education was of the most defective character.*

The English governing classes seem until a very recent date to have felt the same reluctance to educating the working people that they still feel to giving them land. Keep a man landless, and you make him dependent; keep him in ignorance, and you make him subservient. It was urged in England, and the argument has been heard in America, that if all classes are educated the rich cannot secure good servants, and that hired laborers will be discontented with their lot. This is all very well for the masters, but how about the servants? America does not believe that the English lackey, much as he contributes to one's comfort, is the type of man-

* "Fifteen Years of National Education in England," *Westminster Review*, Oct., 1886.

hood that civilization is intended to develop, and it has found from practical experience that a farm-laborer works no worse because he looks forward to being a proprietor himself.

In 1870, England, for the first time, entered upon a system of national education by establishing common schools for the masses. Since that time great progress has been made, although the education is yet defective, is of only an elementary character, and not wholly free.*

In view of the state of education in England at that time, we can appreciate the surprise felt by Charles Dickens when, in 1842, he visited the manufacturing town of Lowell, in Massachusetts. Upon his return

---

* In 1886, Matthew Arnold made a report to the Educational Department of England on the elementary schools of the Continent, which he had examined in an official capacity. Strangely enough, he discovered, what every foreigner knew before, that the English system was much behind that of other countries. He found the school-children of France, Germany, and Switzerland looking "human." Those who have seen the look on the faces of the English peasantry will appreciate his meaning. But what can be expected when we consider how recent has been the effort to raise them up? Matthew Arnold, *Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1886. Still, backward as it is, the system is intended only for the very poor and very young. For the middle classes no provision is made at all. On this subject Mr. Arnold wrote, in 1885: "I have often said that we seem to me to need at present in England three things in especial—more equality, education for the middle classes, and a thorough municipal system: a system of local assemblies is but the natural complement of a thorough municipal system."—*Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1885, p. 231. In 1891 the English budget showed a surplus, caused by the increased consumption of intoxicating liquors in the kingdom. Of this surplus, £2,000,000 were, after a long parliamentary debate, devoted to the cause of elementary education, in addition to the appropriations made before. This will make education for the very poor substantially free.

home he wrote, regarding the operatives that he saw there: "I am now going to state three facts which will startle a large class of readers on this side of the Atlantic very much. Firstly, there is a joint-stock piano in a great many of the boarding-houses. Secondly, nearly all these young ladies subscribe to circulating libraries. Thirdly, they have got up among themselves a periodical called the *Lowell Offering*, 'a repository of original articles written exclusively by females actively employed in the mills,' which is duly printed, published, and sold, and whereof I brought away from Lowell four hundred good, solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end. It will compare advantageously with a great many English annuals."*

Connected with the subject of popular education are some other important and interesting facts. In September, 1886, the Library Association of the United Kingdom met in London. The report then presented showed that in all of England, Scotland, and Ireland there were but one hundred and fourteen free libraries. The London *Standard*, in an article on the subject, held up America as an example for England to imitate. "Americans," it said, "are our masters in many departments of literary administration," and then referred to our town libraries, which in England are almost unknown.† Well may Englishmen express surprise at the public libraries in the United States. According to the last report upon this subject, made by the Commissioner of Education in 1884, those containing more than three

---

* "American Notes," p. 66.

† New York *Tribune*, Sept. 30th, Oct. 4th, 1886. This system began in New York in 1835, but that state has been since far outstripped by some of her sisters.

hundred volumes each numbered over five thousand, with an aggregate of over twenty million volumes, and most of them are free. We have no such single colossal collection as that of the British Museum, but the books there are used only by scholars as works of reference. These, too, which are much needed, will come in time.* The books scattered over America are intended for another purpose, and are read by the people for whom they are supplied. The result is that the Americans, whose tastes are thus fostered, are the greatest reading people of the world. Of all the standard English books, many more copies, in proportion to the population, are sold in the United States than in Great Britain. Even the "Encyclopædia Britannica," supposed to be particularly a work for scholars, had fifty thousand American subscribers for its ninth edition, against ten thousand in Great Britain, with more than half the population of the United States. Of Herbert Spencer's works, more than one hundred thousand were sold before he visited this country, in 1882. When we come to American books, the figures are fabulous. The "American Cyclopedia" had one hundred and twenty thousand subscribers, and the "Memoirs of General Grant" over three hundred thousand.

Turning now from the common schools and the libraries for the education of the masses, when we glance at institutions for higher education, the contrast between America and England is even more marked. The latter country affords no free education to the middle classes,

---

* Of our public libraries, more than three hundred contain over ten thousand volumes, forty-seven over fifty thousand, twelve over a hundred thousand, and two over four hundred thousand each.—Carnegie's "Triumphant Democracy," p. 362.

and no free higher education to any, while in this field America reigns supreme. In thoroughness of instruction her average primary schools, though superior to those of England, are perhaps inferior to those of Germany and even France, with their old civilization and denser populations. But her system of free public high schools is a growth of democracy, which has been as yet achieved in none of the older countries.* France and Germany have some high schools assisted by the State, but America is the only country in the world where the principle is fully recognized that every person is entitled to receive a thorough and complete education at the public charge.

To secure this, not only are free grammar or high schools generally to be found in all the larger towns—and those of Western cities like Denver and Omaha are not inferior to those in Eastern places of the same size† — but twenty-eight states have established state universities, which in most cases offer a free classical and scientific college education. In addition, all the states but six have founded free normal schools and training colleges, some one hundred and thirty-four in number, for the education of male and female teachers.‡ In the United States are three thousand six hundred and fifty schools higher than those for primary instruction. Of these, three hundred and eighty-four, exclusive of those for women alone, are universities or colleges. To be sure, many of these institutions are but

---

* *Westminster Review*, Jan., 1887, p. 13.

† In 1888–89 the United States expended on her high schools about $40,000,000.—"Report of Com. of Education." This was in addition to the $130,000,000 for common schools.

‡ See "Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education," 1887–88.

high schools authorized to confer degrees, but they place the key of knowledge within the reach of every one who cares for a student's life, and increase enormously the chances of bringing to the front any latent genius. In England such development is, in the main, only for the rich.

At one time it was very natural for the American scholar to look down on our American colleges, and to look up with awe to the classic halls of Oxford and Cambridge as model seats of learning. But the latter feeling has practically passed away. The clear-sighted American long since discovered that, to the student, England, with her somewhat antiquated system of instruction, has little to offer. The fact is, that the English are to-day nearly as far behind the world in higher as in primary education. During the great intellectual awakening which followed the Middle Ages, the classics were eagerly studied by European scholars because they opened up a new world of thought, and furnished models of literary excellence elsewhere unknown. In taking up these branches, England lagged a century behind the Continent, and now that other fields are developed she is almost as much in the rear as ever. Although the world has made great advances since the Revival of Learning, it is still very difficult to persuade an Englishman that the sole aim of a university education is not to pass some civil-service examination, or to obtain a knowledge of Greek and Latin, the chief test of a scholar three centuries ago, to which may now be added a knowledge of the mathematics. Everywhere the value of these studies is conceded; but Continental nations recognize the fact that others are of equal, if not of paramount, importance. The result is, that the Englishman of the present generation who desires to pursue with

thoroughness any branch of modern study, including even his own literature, is compelled, in most cases, to seek his instruction in the Continental universities.*

If England has anything of which she may be justly proud, it is her literature, and especially her poetry. From Shakespeare to Tennyson she shows a roll of authors unsurpassed in modern times. Whatever else may pass away, however time may work changes in her form of government—whether she lose Ireland, India, her commercial supremacy, or her wealth—her literature at least will be immortal. Yet when we see a Frenchman writing the only history of that literature worthy of the name, and when we are told by her own scholars that

---

* Of the English university education of to-day, Prof. Huxley says: "That a young Englishman may be turned out of our universities epopt and perfect, so far as their system takes him, and yet ignorant of the noble literature which has grown up in these islands during the last three centuries, no less than of the development of the philosophic and political ideas which have most profoundly influenced modern civilization, is a fact in the history of the nineteenth century which the twentieth will find hard to believe; though, perhaps, it is not more incredible than our current superstition that whoso wishes to write and speak English well should mould his style after the models furnished by classical antiquity."—*The Pall Mall Budget,* Oct. 28, 1886. Cambridge has never done anything worth speaking of for the study of English literature, and it was not until 1886 that a chair for that subject was founded at Oxford. Prof. Max Müller said at the time: "I have had to confess, particularly in conversation with Americans, who often come to Oxford for the sole purpose of studying English literature, that our not having a professor of that subject at Oxford seemed to me a serious blemish."—Idem. Prof. Skeat, of Cambridge, wrote to the new young professor who had been educated at Berlin and Göttingen: "You know—what few Englishmen have any idea of—what training in our language and literature is and involves. For it, American students always go to Germany. They can't get it here."—Idem.

for its proper study one must go to Germany, nothing else as to English higher education need cause surprise.

As to every other department of knowledge the story is now the same. Take medicine, surgery, chemistry, or any other branch of science; law, philosophy, history, or art in any of its forms, and although Englishmen have achieved exceptional greatness in almost every department, no one ever thinks of going to England, as in times past, to pursue his studies. Americans go there to visit the homes of their ancestors, to look at stately castles and superb cathedrals, to travel through a land full of historic interest; but when they wish to study they go to France, Germany, Italy, or Austria.*

So long as America simply followed English prece-

---

* That the English themselves are waking up to an appreciation of the fact that something is wrong about their colleges appears from the protest against their educational system, signed by several hundred leading scholars, which was published in the *Nineteenth Century* for Nov., 1888. See also article on "Oxford and its Professors," *Edinburgh Review*, Oct., 1889. No instruction in English literature, rhetoric, modern European languages or literature, while the attendance at lectures on science, philosophy, law, etc., is little more than nominal. Max Müller says: "To enable young men to pass their examinations seems now to have become the chief, if not the only, object of the universities."—"India, What Can It Teach Us?" Amer. ed. p. 19. The examinations are for admission to the civil service. Every reader, of course, will understand that my remarks apply only to the general system of English education, which is of the last century, and out of touch with modern thought. Individual Englishmen are, through home-training, foreign study, the influence of national societies, and a general intellectual atmosphere in the universities and elsewhere, among the most cultured and scholarly of men. This has come about despite the defects in their system. How much more would be accomplished under a less narrow and insular system is a different question.

dents, her colleges were defective and her scientific schools hardly worthy of the name. Now, under Continental influences which every scholar appreciates, that reproach is passing away. The American system is in process of speedy development. It begins at the bottom with the widest base of general education. Deep scholarship, high intellectual culture, broad scientific knowledge, finished artistic skill, are fruits of slow growth. Why this new country has, in the past, been so deficient in these respects needs no explanation. But now, even in the upper departments, although she has no cause to be boastful, she is making gratifying progress. Already, in wood-engraving for book-illustration, and in artistic silverware, she has no superior, and in stained glass she has no equal. In astronomy and in some branches of mathematics she takes a fair place. In surgery and in all surgical appliances she probably leads the world. Her medical, chemical, and engineering schools are so excellent that for mere purposes of instruction one scarcely needs to go abroad. Her universities are establishing post-graduate courses, which bid fair in time to supersede the necessity of foreign study, in literature and historical science. Harvard, it must be remembered, received and welcomed the new learning from Germany, at the hands of Everett, Bancroft, and Ticknor, before it was accepted at the English universities. Everett's translation of Buttmann's Greek Grammar was reprinted in England, with the "Massachusetts" omitted after the word "Cambridge" at the end of the preface. Mr. Bancroft's translation of Heeren was the first of its kind, and the earliest version from Henry Heine into English was made by a graduate of Harvard.*

* James Russell Lowell, "250th Anniversary of Harvard."

48481

KEENE STATE COLLEGE
LIBRARY

America is to-day the richest and the first manufacturing, as she is the first agricultural, country of the world. If, with her wealth, free institutions, and universal education, she also in the future becomes the first in learning and in art, she will evidently not be following the example of England, where higher education is restricted to the few.

The third peculiar institution of America is that of local self-government.

The contrast in this particular between America and England is as marked as anything that can be well imagined; but it was little noticed in the latter country until the agitation of the question of home rule for Ireland brought it to the front. Even now, after all that has been written upon the subject, unless one has examined the subject with care, it is difficult for a person on this side of the Atlantic to appreciate the condition of local government in Great Britain. The difficulty arises from the fact that there is nothing which can be called a system, and the consequent helter-skelter confusion is something the very existence of which seems to an American almost incredible. Ask the average Englishman to explain how local affairs are managed in England, and he will look at you with wonder. He can perhaps tell you something about his own parish, or something very vague about his own county, but beyond that he knows nothing. Some matters are regulated by the clergyman and his vestry, others by the poor wardens; the sheriffs and county officials are appointed by the Crown, which means the Cabinet; but of local self-government by the people themselves almost nothing exists except in the cities and larger towns.*

* The reader who wishes to study the character of English local

When the Englishman turns to America, he sees a system, and it is one that fills him with surprise, at least, if with no other feeling. Generally he looks only at its more salient features, the relations between the states and the federal government. In England Parliament legislates for the whole kingdom. That body takes upon itself the management of the domestic, the local, the parochial, the municipal affairs of all the communities

---

institutions can consult "Local Government," by M. D. Chalmers, in the "English Citizen Series," Macmillan & Co., 1883. This book tells a tale almost incredible of confusion, inefficiency, and waste. "Local government in this country," it says, "may be fitly described as consisting of a chaos of areas, a chaos of authorities, and a chaos of rates," p. 17. "Confusion and extravagance are the characteristic features of the whole system," p. 21. "Local boards are innumerable, many of them are useless, but are kept up merely to supply places and salaries for the officials."—Idem. "The total property in England liable to taxation is estimated to produce a gross rental of £157,000,000. Local expenditures for 1880 amounted to £50,000,000, nearly one third of the rental," pp. 26, 28. "English local affairs are regulated by some 650 acts of Parliament of general application, and several thousand of a special character for particular towns or districts. The latter accumulate at the rate of about sixty a year. In England and Wales are 52 counties, 239 municipal boroughs, 70 Improvement Act districts, 1006 urban sanitary districts, 41 port sanitary authorities, 577 rural sanitary districts, 2051 school-board districts, 424 highway districts, 843 burial-board districts, 649 unions, 194 lighting and watching districts, 14,916 poor-law parishes, 5064 highway parishes, and about 13,000 ecclesiastical parishes. These all overlap and intersect each other, so as to make a perfect tangle of jurisdictions. One farm of 200 acres was, some few years ago, in twelve different parishes, and subject to about fifty different rates," pp. 18, 21. Some districts are governed by twelve, fifteen, or twenty different local authorities, selected at different times, and with different qualifications for the voters. No wonder that every Englishman gives the subject up in despair, as incapable of comprehension.

of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. It arranges for every local gas bill, water bill, sewerage bill, and railway bill for the two islands. In America, the Federal Congress legislates only on matters of national concern, everything else is left to the separate states.

But the difference between the two countries goes much deeper than this. The American system is a complete one, reaching down to the foundations, and the foundations are its most important portions. At the bottom lies the township, which divides the whole North and West into an infinity of little republics, each managing its own local affairs. In the old states they differ in area and in their machinery. In the new states of the West they are more regular in size, being generally six miles square. But in all the system is substantially alike. Each township elects its own local officers and manages its own local affairs. Annually, a town meeting is held of all the voters, and suffrage is limited only by citizenship. At these meetings, not only are the local officers elected, such as supervisors, town-clerks, justices of the peace, road-masters, and the like, but money is appropriated for bridges, schools, libraries, and other purposes of a local nature.

Next above the township stands the county, an aggregate of a dozen or so of towns. Its officials, sheriffs, judges, clerks, registers, and other officers to manage county affairs are chosen at the general state election. It also has a local assembly, formed of the town supervisors. They audit accounts, supervise the county institutions, and legislate as to various county matters.

Above the counties again stands the state government, with its legislature, which passes laws relating to state affairs; and finally the federal government, which deals only with national concerns. The whole forms a con-

sistent and harmonious system, which reminded Matthew Arnold of a well-fitting suit of clothes, loose where it should be loose, and tight where tightness is an advantage.

As we have already noticed, the feature of it all which strikes the Englishman most forcibly is the separation of local from national affairs in the administration of the state and the general government. But the township system, with its more direct local self-government, is of greater importance. Given that, and the rest of the system follows almost as matter of course. Every American is a politician, and feels a keen interest in his presidential and state elections. But, after all, these are generally of much less practical importance to him than the home elections, which determine whether his local affairs shall be wisely, economically, and justly administered. General taxation is a trifle compared with that for his schools, roads, bridges, and other local expenses. It is in the town meeting that the incipient statesman is formed. It is in managing his local affairs that the American acquires the discipline, the self-respect, and self-reliance which enable him, when occasion calls, to command a company, a regiment, or an army, control a railroad or govern a state. When our late war closed, the United States had one of the most efficient armies that ever stood in line of battle. The secret lay in the fact that each man was a drilled and disciplined, but at the same time a thinking, machine. The drill and discipline came from years of service, but the man beneath them came from the school-house and the town meeting.

Now, does any one imagine that the American institutions of local self-government are of English origin? What England is to-day we have faintly outlined. As

to the past, we can pursue the same line of inquiry as was followed in relation to the origin of the free-school system. It was only where the Puritans settled that the township and the town meeting were fully developed. Virginia attempted to copy directly the parishes and vestries, boroughs and guilds, of England. Jefferson said: "These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their government; and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation." De Tocqueville wrote, over fifty years ago: "The more we descend towards the South, the less active does the business of the township or parish become; the population exercises a less immediate influence on affairs; the power of the elected magistrate is augmented and that of the elections diminished, while the public spirit of the local communities is less awakened and less influential." The system does not appear to be English in its origin. How it came to America is an interesting question.

We have now passed in review some of the most important of the institutions which to-day are found in the United States and are not found in England. Even if we went no further, he would be a bold man who, after studying their influence upon the national life and character, should still continue to claim that America was only a transplanted England. But, in addition to these peculiar institutions, there are others, now common to both countries, which have exerted a powerful influence in the United States for more than a century, while they have been only recently introduced into England, and in that country are just beginning to bear fruit.

Three of these are of an importance which no one

will question. They are freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and the secret ballot. The first protects the conscience, the second protects the mind, the third protects the suffrage. Without these guarantees the United States of the nineteenth century seems impossible, and yet for none of them are we indebted to the legislation or to the example of the mother country. In adopting each of them, England has not been the leader, but has followed in the footsteps of America.

First, as to the introduction of religious liberty into the two countries, a few dates tell the whole story. Of the Established Church in England I have already spoken — the Church which exacts a tax from every one, and which is the chief bulwark of the aristocracy. Still, with the exception of this tax, all religious denominations stand to-day in England on a basis of equality before the law, save that a Catholic cannot sit on the throne, nor can he hold the office of Lord Chancellor of England or that of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. But the establishment of this equality is of very recent date. In 1689 a partial Act of Toleration was enacted, but it was not extended to Unitarians until 1813, to Roman Catholics until 1829, and to Jews until 1858. Until such respective dates the members of these proscribed religious bodies were excluded from public office, while it was not until 1871 that all religious tests were abolished in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, so as to open those institutions equally to students of all religious denominations.

The removal of this last restriction, as we shall see hereafter, was nearly a hundred years after religious liberty had been proclaimed in the United States.

Next let us consider the question of the freedom of the press. Of the importance of this subject nothing

need be said; but here again attention is for the present requested simply to a few facts and dates. About a century after the printing-press was introduced into England, and as soon as it came to be recognized as a power in religious and political discussions, it was placed under a rigid censorship. Printing was permitted only in certain specified places, and the approval of certain officials was required before a book could be given to the public. This system continued until 1693, when the licensing law was permitted to expire.*

But with the abolition of the censorship the English judges took the subject up, and the system which was developed under their manipulation of the law was nearly as oppressive as the one just abolished. They held that in criminal prosecutions for libel—and such prosecutions were the ordinary means of silencing political opponents—the truth could not be given in evidence, and that the jury before whom the offender was tried had nothing to do except to pass upon the fact of publication. "The greater the truth, the greater the libel," became the maxim of the law. In other words, if a citizen published a statement regarding an official or a candidate for office, charging him with corruption or with any other offence against the state, the publisher or author could be arrested for libel, and would be tried before a judge, who excluded all evidence of the truth of the charges, left to the jury only the question of the publication or authorship, and then, if the prisoner was found guilty, sentenced him to fine or imprisonment, and frequently to both.

No one at all acquainted with the political history of England needs to be told how persistently this muzzle

* Hallam's "Constitutional History," iii. 163.

of the press was utilized by the government during the last century. There were, from time to time, juries to be found who, under the spell of consummate orators, were willing to go to prison for contempt of court rather than to find a verdict against the tribunes of the people. But for such revolts against the law English liberty would have been dead indeed. Yet although under these occasional breaths of free air the spark was kept alive, the flame burned very low.*

---

* Chief Justice Holt is represented in history as one of the friends and upholders of liberty. In 1704, Tutchin, the printer of the *Observator*, was tried before him for an article criticising Queen Anne's ministers in language which we should now consider very innocent. The defendant's counsel having attempted to justify it, Holt observed to the jury: "I am surprised to be told that a writing is not a libel which reflects upon the government, and endeavors to possess the people with the notion that the government is administered by corrupt persons. If writers should not be called to account for possessing the people with an ill opinion of the government, no government can subsist. You are to consider whether the words which I have read to you do not tend to beget an ill opinion of the administration of the government. Their purport is that those who are employed know nothing of the matter, and those who do know are not employed; that men are not adapted to offices, but offices to men, out of particular regard to their interest, and not to their fitness." The defendant was accordingly found guilty. Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices" (Blanchard & Lea, 1853), ii. 120. This was the law for many years, that any reflection upon the administration was punishable as a criminal libel. See Hallam's "Cons. Hist.," iii. 164–166. In 1731, on the trial of Franklin, Lord Raymond positively refused to admit any evidence to prove the published matter to be true. In the famous trial of the Dean of St. Asaph, some fifty years later, Lord Mansfield sustained this doctrine, and he was afterwards supported in his view of the law by all the judges in the House of Lords. Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices," ii. 410–413.

In 1792, Mr. Fox's Libel bill was passed, declaring that on a trial for libel the jury, in giving its verdict, had a right to take into consideration the character and tendency of the paper alleged to be libellous. Still, the truth of the facts stated in the publication complained of could not be inquired into; for half a century longer the maxim prevailed, "the greater the truth the greater the libel;" and it was only in the year 1845, under Lord Campbell's Libel bill, that the truth was finally admitted in evidence, and the jury was allowed to decide whether the defendant was actuated by malice or by a desire for the good of the community.*

Such was the law of libel in England until 1845. Now let us turn to the United States. The first amendments to the Federal Constitution, adopted in 1791, provided that Congress should make no law "abridging the freedom of speech or of the press," and most of the early constitutions of the states already contained similar or more stringent guarantees. But in 1790 a further step had been taken by one of the Middle States. In that year Pennsylvania adopted her second Constitution, which contained the following provision: "In prosecutions for the publications of papers investigating the official conduct of officers or men in a public capacity, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence; and in all indictments for libels the jury shall have a right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the court, as in other cases." This was two years before the half-way measure of Mr. Fox, and fifty-five years before the bill of Lord Campbell. Imitating the example

* Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices," "Mansfield," ii. 413.

of Pennsylvania, the other states followed with similar provisions, so that long before the press was free in England, America had adopted the principle that in prosecutions for libel the truth could be given in evidence if published for proper motives and for justifiable ends, and that the jury was to judge of the law as well as of the facts.*

As we search in vain to find in England the origin of the religious freedom and the freedom of the press which prevail in the United States, so we shall meet with the same results in searching for the origin of the system under which our elections are carried on by means of a written or printed ballot. A secret election is the safeguard of republican institutions. Where votes for public officers are given *viva voce*, or in any other manner which permits one person to learn how another has voted, there can be no real freedom of elections. This principle is now so well understood that it seems an axiom in politics, and yet it was not until the year 1872 that voting by ballot was introduced into the mother

* New York did not embody this principle in her Constitution until 1821; but the Legislature had declared by a statute, passed in 1805, that this was the law of the state. In 1735, when a colony, her lawyers insisted that the English law of libel was not applicable here, and the court held with them so far as to permit the jury to pass upon the law as well as the facts, and the prisoner was acquitted. "Zenger's Trial," printed in New York and London. Thenceforth the New York press was free; but in New England a censorship existed until about 1755. Tyler's "Hist. of American Literature," i. 113. In 1723, for example, Benjamin Franklin was forced to leave Boston, much to the advantage of Pennsylvania, for having published a libel on its hierarchy; his brother, for the same offence, was imprisoned for a month, and forbidden to publish his paper except under official supervision.

country. Until that time all municipal elections, and all elections for members of Parliament, were conducted by show of hands or oral declarations, after the primitive fashion of rude nations, the feudal chieftain, the landlord, or employer being enabled to see whether his henchmen, tenant, or employé was voting for the candidate of his selection.

For many years protests had been made against this system. O'Connell introduced a bill on the subject in 1830, and the original draft of the reform bill of Lord John Russell provided for voting by ballot. But writers like Sydney Smith denounced the "Mouse-trap" scheme, and the influence of the men who profited by intimidation or corruption was powerful enough to prevent its adoption until 1872, when Mr. Forster passed his famous act, which, deriving its main features from Australia, combines the elements of secrecy, simplicity, and efficiency.*

Here again we see America as an instructor, and not as a copyist, of England. When the thirteen colonies adopted their first state constitutions, from 1776 to 1790, four of the thirteen—Delaware, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia—provided that all voting at elections should be by ballot.† The Constitution of New York permitted the Legislature to try it as an experiment; this was done in the election of governor and lieutenant-governor in 1778, and ten years later the new system was fully introduced. Following these examples all the states, old and new, have by their constitu-

---

* "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Ballot."

† Connecticut and Rhode Island, which continued to live under their old charters for many years, already had the system.

tions provided for the same mode of voting, Kentucky bringing up the rear in 1891.*

This is not the place for considering the question of the origin of religious liberty, the freedom of the press, or the secret ballot. Hereafter these subjects will be discussed. But one fact in regard to their existence in America is very apparent. As religious liberty and the secret ballot were established here nearly a century, and the freedom of the press more than half a century, before their establishment in England, we need not look for their origin to any English precedent. English writers, like Sir Henry Maine, who have looked into the *Federalist*, express surprise at the sources from which the expounders of the Federal Constitution drew their historical illustrations. Their writings display, Maine says, an entire familiarity with the Republic of the United Netherlands, and the Romano-German Empire, but "there is one fund of political experience upon which the *Federalist* seldom draws, and that is the political experience of Great Britain."† But the men who founded the American

* Kentucky, which was carved out of Virginia, adopted the ballot in its first Constitution, 1792, but went back to the English *viva-voce* system in 1799, and retained it until 1891, except in elections for congressmen, which are regulated by a statute of the United States. Virginia itself retained the old system until 1864. During the agitation for a ballot in England, extending over more than half a century, the example of the United States was constantly referred to by its advocates. See *Edinburgh Review*, 1853, p. 611; 1831, p. 481. For other articles on the subject, see 1819, p. 165; 1833, p. 543; 1837, p. 211; 1857, p. 262.

† "Popular Government," by Sir Henry Maine, p. 206. This same writer, in an earlier work, referring to the American Revolution, makes a significant remark: "The American lawyers of the time, and particularly those of Virginia, appear to have possessed a stock of knowledge which differed chiefly from that of their English con-

republics, state and federal, were not seeking to imitate Great Britain. They set out to establish institutions such as they thought England ought to have, and not those which they found existing. The difference between these two objects, the actual and the ideal English institutions of a century ago, although often overlooked, is very marked.

Leaving now these great institutions which lie at the base of the republic, let us see how America deals with her dependent, abnormal, and criminal population, who in England form such a large section of the people. In 1842, Charles Dickens said of Boston: "Above all, I sincerely believe that the public institutions and charities of this capital of Massachusetts are as nearly perfect as the most considerate wisdom, benevolence, and humanity can make them. I never in my life was more affected by the contemplation of happiness under circumstances of privation and bereavement than in my visits to these establishments." * In commenting on the difference between the charities of America and England, Dickens laid great and deserved stress upon the fact that those of this country were in the main managed by the state, while in England they are left to the benevolence of private individuals. He argued that where the unfortunate classes are regarded as wards of the people at large, a better feeling must exist towards the government than where they are considered outcasts and mere objects of private charity. This is the key-note of the difference between the nations, and we find the same contrast here as in the matter of education.

---

temporaries in including much which could only have been derived from the legal literature of Continental Europe."—"Ancient Law," Amer. ed. p. 91.

* "American Notes."

In the United States, the blind, deaf and dumb, and imbecile are looked upon as citizens having a claim upon the State, and it is one always cheerfully acknowledged. In England they are regarded as paupers, who must be kept from starving by the poor-rates, but beyond that having no claim upon the government. In fact, Great Britain, to-day, is the only country in the civilized world where the State does not aid in the education of the blind, the deaf and dumb, and those without ordinary mental powers.* The proportion of the abnormal classes in America is much smaller than in Great Britain, so that fewer institutions are needed as compared with the population. Great Britain and Ireland, for example, have forty-six deaf-and-dumb asylums, all private, while the United States has sixty-nine. The latter are mostly public, however, and in them the whole cost of board, clothing, and education is in almost every case undertaken by the State.†

When we now turn to prison reforms, we shall see America again as an instructor. No one at all acquainted with history needs to be told of the criminal code of England and of the prison system, which continued there until a very recent date. Up to the reign of George I. there were sixty-seven offences that were punishable by

---

* "The British tax-payer, alone among all civilized Christian men, enjoys immunity from taxation for the instruction of those who under the name of the 'abnormal classes,' those who without sight and without ordinary mental power, are the special care of even such a poor nation as Norway."—Dr. Buxton's "Notes on Progress."

† *The Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1884, p. 597; Report of U. S. Com. of Education, 1887–88. Besides these, the United States have thirty-two public asylums for the blind and twenty-two for feeble-minded children. Idem.

death. Between his accession and the termination of the reign of George III., about one hundred and thirty-six were added to the number. Of the criminal statutes of Great Britain, Sir Samuel Romilly said: "I have examined the codes of all nations, and ours is the worst, and worthy of the anthropophagi." As for the prisons, they were what Macaulay called them, simply "hells on earth."

The first reform in the criminal code of English-speaking people began in Pennsylvania, having been ordered in the State Constitution of 1776, and this was followed by a penitentiary built at Philadelphia in 1786, through the influence of the Friends. The method of confinement in this institution is known as the Pennsylvania system. It consists of absolute solitary imprisonment, in which the convict is shut off from all human companionship. New York followed, in 1797, with a new penal code and a new penal system. At first, the solitary Pennsylvania plan was tried, but this was found to entail serious physical and mental evils upon the subjects. Finally, at Auburn prison there was introduced, in 1823, the system of solitary confinement at night, with congregated silent work by day. This is known as the Auburn system, and has been more generally adopted throughout the civilized world.*

In Great Britain, despite the labors of the noble Howard, Elizabeth Fry, and others, there was no real prison reform until after 1831. In that year a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to investigate the whole subject, and shortly afterwards it sent a representative, Mr. Crawford, across the Atlantic to examine the prisons of America, which just at that time had

---

* "A Half Century with Juvenile Delinquents," by B. K. Peirce, D.D. (New York, 1869), p. 31.

been highly praised by distinguished travellers from France.* Upon his return, in 1834, Mr. Crawford made an able and exhaustive report, which attracted wide attention. The result was the introduction into England of the American prison system, upon both the Pennsylvania and the New York model.

But America has done more than to give model penitentiary systems to the Old World. One of the greatest evils of the former prisons consisted in the huddling together of all ages and classes—the young with the old, the child guilty of his first offence with the habitual criminal, grown gray in crime. In the removal of this moral leprosy New York led the way by establishing, in 1824, a House of Refuge for juvenile delinquents.† By the laws of the state magistrates were, and ever since have been, authorized to send to this reformatory institution all minors convicted of trivial offences, and even those guilty of felony if under sixteen years of age. There they are taught trades, are educated to habits of industry and thrift, learn that they have friends who care for their welfare, physical and spiritual, and the result has been that a large proportion of the inmates have been permanently reformed. In 1828, Pennsylvania followed the example of New York, and in the

---

* "There can be little doubt," says a writer in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (article "Prison Discipline"), "that this committee, like every one just then, was greatly struck by the superior method of prison discipline pursued in the United States. The best American prisons had recently been visited by two eminent Frenchmen, MM. Beaumont and De Tocqueville, who spoke of them in terms of the highest praise. It was with the object of appropriating what was best in the American system that Mr. Crawford was despatched across the Atlantic on a special mission of inquiry."

† *Edinburgh Review*, 1855, p. 396.

next forty years over twenty similar institutions were established in the United States, which, in that time, gathered within their walls from forty to fifty thousand criminal or imperilled children. From America the system has spread to Europe, and is now almost universal.* As the result of this kind of work, the commitments of female vagrants in the city of New York fell off from 5880 in 1860 to 2525 in 1885, although in that time the population nearly doubled. The commitments of young girls for petit larceny were diminished from 944 to 243, and those of males from 2626 to 1950. Since 1853 one association in New York, the Children's Aid Society, has found homes in the West for some 80,000 persons, most of them outcast, neglected, and orphan children, of whom over ninety-five per cent. have turned out well.† England established her first public institution for juvenile offenders under the act of 1854.‡

We have now reviewed most of the important institutions which may be considered peculiarly American—that is, such as are found in this country, and not in all other countries claiming to be civilized. In our freedom from a State Church, the principle of equality underlying our whole system, in our written constitutions, the organization of our Senate, the power of our Supreme Court, our wide-spread local self-government, and our methods of transmitting and alienating land, we find, even to-day, the most radical differences between America and the mother country; while we also find that we

* "A Half Century with Juvenile Delinquents." The census of 1890 shows that there are now in the United States about sixty of these juvenile reformatories. Census Bulletin No. 72.

† See Report of Society for 1886, p. 17.

‡ See *Nineteenth Century*, Jan., 1887; "Prison Discipline," by Lord Norton.

have been leaders, and not followers, in those institutions where a resemblance now exists, such as our system of popular education, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, the secret ballot, and the vast machinery of public charitable and reformatory work.

There still remains one subject to be considered in this connection, our American system of law, which is usually regarded as of English origin. To some persons, especially those of the legal profession, this topic seems of great importance; they call crimes by English names, use English phrases in their legal documents, read English law-books, and are inclined to argue, from the standpoint of their studies, that we must be an English race, because we inherit the inestimable legacy of the Common Law.

The question as to our legal system has been already discussed, so far as relates to the most important subjects with which governments ever attempt to deal; that is, religion through the Church, education through the printing-press, means of subsistence through the land, and the development of manhood through local self-government. Compared with the law upon these subjects, which England certainly did not transmit to us, the rules by which states or individuals transact their ordinary business are but minor matters.

As for the machinery of justice in America, some features of it are important, for they have served to shape the national character; such are trial by jury, the right of accused persons to be defended by counsel, and the employment by the State of special officers for the prosecution of criminals. These may be regarded as institutions; and, as they are not common to all countries, their origin is on that account noteworthy, and will receive consideration in another place. But the body

of municipal law, which lays down rules of action for the common affairs of life, stands on a different basis. Among all civilized nations, although different names may be employed, the same crimes are punished, and in much the same manner; the same principles of law prevail in business matters, and there is but little variance in their modes of application. The question of the origin of these rules as they exist to-day in the United States is, however, an interesting one, and, if not of intrinsic importance, its discussion will throw a side-light on some other material subjects.

Apart from the great differences already noticed, and some others which will be specifically pointed out hereafter, the legal systems of England and America are much alike. But this alone does not prove that American law is of English origin, any more than it would prove it in regard to the Decalogue, which we also have in common with our kin across the sea. The latter, although read by most Americans only in King James's version of the Bible, far antedates the birth of England, and so does much of what we somewhat loosely speak of as English law. Most of this law is a transplanted growth, very little, except the decayed or stunted shoots, having sprung from British soil. Some of it has come to us by the way of England—that is, through the decisions of her judges and the writings of her commentators—but even the amount of this is often overestimated. We speak of English law as of English agriculture and English manufactures, little realizing at the time how all of the three have changed since America was settled. As to the law, the change, though gradual, has been almost a revolution.*

* "An account of the growth and development of our legal system

Such of the early settlers of America as came from England were so opposed to the whole legal machinery which they left behind them, that in some of the colonies lawyers were not permitted to practise their profession. Any one who reads the State Trials of the time of Elizabeth and the Stuarts will understand their abhorrence of the English mode of administering criminal law. But, apart from this, they disliked the whole civil jurisprudence of their native land, regarding it as cumbrous, intricate, unjust, a snare for the unwary and a weapon for the knave. Well might they entertain such opinions, for probably they were founded on their own bitter experience. Few things in the history of England, during the last half of the sixteenth and the first part of the seventeenth century, are more remarkable than the prevalence of litigation, the growth and wealth of the lawyers, their chicanery, and the abuses of the courts.* The system was such that justice, even when there was honesty among the judges, was almost utterly lost sight of in a jungle of technicalities, worthy of the early schoolmen. The American colonists generally supplanted this system with codes, many of the provisions of which were not borrowed from England, all having the merit of simplicity and being based on plain principles of justice.†

---

is perhaps the most urgently needed of all additions to English knowledge." — Sir Henry Maine, "The Early History of Institutions" (Henry Holt, 1888), p. 342. See Gneist, "Hist. of the English Constitution," ii. 331, as to the want of a work on the history of English law in the eighteenth century, when the most rapid changes took place in some departments.

* See Hall's "Society in the Elizabethan Age."

† The early codes of Massachusetts and Connecticut are on some important points more than a century in advance of the law in Eng-

As the colonies grew, their jurisprudence naturally developed with them, and after they became independent states this development was much more rapid. New law was required to meet new conditions of society. Sometimes the want was supplied by enactments of the Legislature, at others by what Bentham aptly called judge-made law, the creation of the courts. The result is that the legal system of America has changed about as much in the last two centuries as the face of the country itself. In England, too, the same change has been going on, in much the same directions, and from the same causes.

Some of the admirers of the old Common Law, who regard it as the perfection of human reasoning—perhaps upon the theory that knowing it to be ugly they think it must be great—tell us that all this seeming transformation is unreal, that there has been only a development of original principles, and that the seeds of all our modern system were contained in the earliest jurisprudence of the English race. Such a view of the facts ignores all the Continental influences which have affected the institutions of England, and to a much greater extent those of the United States. To show how this effect has been produced is the main object of the present work, and to its general discussion the subject of the law might make a fitting prelude.

England and America have, to-day, much the same

---

land. Cromwell, who had studied law, and the other leading men of the Commonwealth were almost as much opposed to the lawyers as the colonists themselves. They wished to simplify the law, but the lawyers, as a class, opposed this and every other reform. They flourished on abuses. Cromwell regarded them not only as corrupt, but as among the worst enemies of liberty. Hosmer's "Sir Henry Vane," p. 438. I shall show hereafter what attempts were made under the Commonwealth to reform the law.

legal principles, but they are the same because derived in large measure from a common foreign source, the Roman Civil Law. It is to Rome that we are indebted for almost all of our system of equity and admiralty; our laws relating to the administration of estates and the care of minors, the rights of married women, bailments, and, to a large extent, our whole system of commercial law. Of the old Common Law of early times, the system of a race of barbarians, very little now remains. How this has been brought about is a very simple story.

It must be borne in mind that the men who conquered the Britons and founded England were pagan savages, the rudest of their race, and least tinctured with the civilization of Rome. Cut off from the Continent, where much of the old civilization still survived, the descendants of these men lingered on in barbarism, long after some of their brethren across the Channel. As for the law of the conquerors, it was such as might be expected from such a source. They knew and cared little about legal principles. Quite early they established the doctrine, common to all rude nations,* that what some chief or judge had decided years before, however monstrous or unjust, must be followed by his successors. This made memory take the place of reason, a substitution never entirely reversed among their descendants, either in legal or political discussions. But if there was little reason, there was enough reasoning to take its place. This, however, was of the same character as that which prevailed in the early universities, where words were everything and principles of small account. Under this system there grew up a jurisprudence cumbrous, complicated, and unnatural, which in many of its features will

* See Maine's "Ancient Law."

only excite amazement and derision among our descendants a few generations hence.

Still, there was one link between England and the Continent; that was the Romish Church, which was soon re-established. This brought in foreign ecclesiastics, and fortunately some of them had a knowledge of the law of Rome. They not only fostered its study in the colleges, but, obtaining judicial power as chancellors, where it was possible, and against the bitter opposition of the other judges, they adopted its more enlightened principles in the courts, building up what is known as the system of equity, to correct the crudities, injustice, and absurdities of the Common Law. When England in time became a commercial and manufacturing country, and was brought into contact with her more advanced neighbors, the process went on further. The nations of the Continent had formed their jurisprudence on the Civil Law: it was taught in their universities, and became the basis of all commercial dealings. Hence it was that with the development of her commerce and manufactures England absorbed more and more of the law of ancient Rome.

As to the character of this law, let us call a few modern witnesses. Chancellor Kent says of the Pandects of Justinian that, with all their errors and imperfections, they "are the greatest repository of sound legal principles applied to the private rights and business of mankind that has ever appeared in any age or nation."* Sir George Bowyer says: "The corpus of civil law is a juridical compilation which contains the whole science of jurisprudence."† Roby adds that the Civil Law of Rome

* Kent's "Commentary," i. 541.

† "Introduction to the Study of the Civil Law," p. 3.

is to-day the principal source of private law in all the civilized countries of the world.*

"Servatur ubique jus Romanum non ratione imperii sed imperio rationis."†

It was upon this foundation that Grotius, of Holland, built up the modern system of international law. No one needs to be told that it was from the law of Rome that Lord Mansfield, in the last century, borrowed the principles which, though they excited the indignation of Junius, have given to his name an imperishable renown as the father of English commercial jurisprudence. Within the present century the assimilation has been going on more rapidly than ever. Much of the result, in America, is due to the efforts of Judge Story, whose text-books are filled with illustrations and principles borrowed from the Civil Law. But the work has been progressing in all directions. Looking at our legal system to-day, it can be said that most things in it consistent with natural justice come from Rome, and that its incongruous, absurd, and unjust features are a survival of old English customs and English legislation.

Such statements as to the influence of the Civil Law upon the jurisprudence of England and America may seem novel to some readers; but the whole subject of the influence of Rome upon modern society is comparatively new. From their early training, in school and college, many persons are inclined to regard the literature and

* Roby's "Introduction to Justinian's Digest."

† See also Phillimore's "Introduction to the Study of Roman Law," and "Private Law among the Romans." Sir Henry Maine says of it: "The Roman law, which, next to the Christian religion, is the most plentiful source of the rules governing actual conduct throughout Western Europe."—"The Early History of Institutions" (Henry Holt, 1888), p. 9. Also Maine's "Ancient Law," *passim.*

the history of Greece and Rome as standing on the same basis in their relations to modern life: that of importance to the scholar, and of insignificance to the so-called man of practical affairs. This is a great mistake. We speak of the authors of Greece and Rome as equally the classics, and are inclined to regard the language, institutions, and history of each country as equally dead. In fact, they are all living, but in a very different sphere of action. It has been well said that no language should be called dead which embalms living thoughts. From this point of view the Greek will never die, for it is the language of poetry, philosophy, and eloquence. In these departments it reigns supreme, and here the Roman tongue can bear no comparison with it. Hence it was that in the revival of learning the Greek classics played so great a part as re-civilizers of the world. Some persons think that their mission is now accomplished, and that for the future they may be relegated to the specialists, with the authors of India or Egypt. Whether this is so or not we need not here discuss; I desire now simply to call attention to the fact that the literature and history of Rome occupy a very different position. The Greeks were poets, artists, philosophers; the Romans were essentially practical men, men of action, architects of empires, law-givers, moulders of institutions.

From the historic life of Greece the modern world is cut off as by a broad deep sea, although one underlaid with electric cables such as now bind the continents together. From Rome, however, there is no such severance. When the barbaric hordes swept over the Continent of Europe, in one sense Rome went down, but in another she survived, for she absorbed the conquerors, gave them her language and laws, and largely shaped their institutions. "All roads lead to Rome," says the

old motto, and historians are beginning to fully appreciate, as Freeman has pointed out, that in modern history all roads also diverge from the Eternal City.

So long as the centuries which succeeded the downfall of Rome were regarded as periods of almost abysmal darkness, sharply dividing ancient from modern civilization and thus unworthy of the attention of the scholar, this connection was of course unrecognized. In fact, in our school systems the study of Roman history formerly ended with the foundation of the Empire. As for Gibbon, whose magnificent work, although incomplete and corrected in many places by later investigations, still stands as a vast monument of erudition, it was the fashion to regard the author as an enemy of religion, and his history as a book to be kept from the hands of the immature. The result has been that the past generation had, in general, but vague notions of the Roman Empire, regarding it as the home of tyranny and universal corruption, and its barbarian successors as something like a devastating flood which swept away all that the world had ever known of law, order, and civilization.

One of the chief instruments in removing this erroneous impression has been the study of the Roman law, as carried on in the Continental universities. For many years it was believed that the Pandects of Justinian had been lost for centuries, and were only discovered at Amalfi in 1137. This theory has been thoroughly exploded, and the fact established that they were never lost, but were always studied and became the chief factor in moulding the jurisprudence of the new kingdoms of the Continent.* The other theory, that Rome, under

* "History of the Roman Law during the Middle Ages," M. de Savigny.

the Empire, was the cesspool of corruption depicted by some of her historians and satirists has also been shown to be unfounded.*

The Roman law took its form mainly in the first three centuries of the Empire. A portion of this period is described by Gibbon, in language of great significance, as the world's true golden age.†

Those were what we call heathen times, but it must be remembered that, before this law was codified for future generations, Rome had accepted Christianity, and under its influence great and beneficial changes had been introduced, chief among which were those relating to the rights and position of women and minors. In the sixth century, from 529 to 565, Justinian gathered up all that was considered valuable in the old and new systems, and gave to the world the compilations

---

* "History of Rome and the Roman People," Victor Duruy, vi. 309, etc.

† "If a man were called upon to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of five successive emperors, whose character and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws."—Gibbon, vol. i. chap. iii. See as to Trajan's time, the Letters of the younger Pliny. One of these emperors, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, has left for posterity his ideas as to life and its conduct. Nowhere can a nobler philosophy be found, inculcating, as it does, self-control, self-abnegation, benevolence, charity, and toleration.

which, ever since studied upon the Continent, have been the delight and wonder not alone of the jurist, but of the philosopher and moralist as well. What comparison could be expected, when men put aside their petty prejudices, between such a system and that of the uncultured pagan savages who laid the foundation of the English Common Law? From these suggestions the reader who is not a lawyer can perhaps understand why it is that American students who desire to obtain a profound knowledge of jurisprudence go to Germany to study the Civil Law.*

---

* The unprofessional reader can scarcely appreciate the rapid changes in our legal system now in progress, mainly attributable to the fact that we have cut loose from England, from English modes of thought and courses of study. At the 250th anniversary of Harvard College, Judge Oliver Wendell Homes, Jr., of Massachusetts, made a notable address before the Law School Association. Speaking of Judge Story, who was a great student of the Civil Law, and who, he said, has done more than any other English-speaking man in this century to make the law luminous and easy to understand, he remarked: "But Story's simple philosophizing has ceased to satisfy men's minds. I think it might be said with safety that no man of his or of the succeeding generation could have stated the law in a form that deserved to abide, because neither his nor the succeeding generation possessed or could have possessed the historical knowledge, had made or could have made the analyses of principles, which are necessary before the cardinal doctrines of the law can be known and understood in their precise contours and in their innermost meanings.

"This new work is now being done. Under the influence of Germany, science is gradually drawing legal history into its sphere. The facts are being scrutinized by eyes microscopic in intensity and panoramic in scope. At the same time, under the influence of our revived interest in philosophical speculation, a thousand heads are analyzing and generalizing the rules of law and the ground on which they stand. The law has got to be stated over again, and I venture

How America has led England in some of the more salient legal reforms can be seen from a few examples. When the American States adopted their first constitutions, five of them contained a provision that every person accused of crime was to be allowed counsel for his defence. The same right was, in 1791, granted for all America in the first amendments to the Constitution of the United States. This would seem to be an elementary principle of justice, but it was not adopted in England until nearly half a century later, and then only after a bitter struggle, to which I shall refer hereafter. Somewhat akin to this is the reverse principle prevailing in the United States, that in criminal trials the government shall in every county be represented by a special public prosecutor, generally called a district attorney. Nothing of this kind is known in England, even at the present day, although the introduction of the system has been frequently advocated by the highest authorities. The last American reform in criminal law is that of allowing prisoners to testify in their own behalf. This is also now advocated in England.*

In civil matters, the greatest reform of modern times has been the simplification of procedure in the courts, and the virtual amalgamation of law and equity. Here again America took the lead, through the adoption by New York, in 1848, of a Code of Practice, which has been followed by most of the other states of the Union, and in its main features has lately been taken up by England. In the same manner have come about the reforms in the laws relating to married women, by which a whole

---

to say that in fifty years we shall have it in a form of which no man could have dreamed fifty years ago."

* See article by Justice J. F. Stephen, *Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1886.

sex has been emancipated. According to the old English theory, a woman was a chattel, all of whose property belonged to her husband. He could beat her as he might a beast of burden, and, provided that he was not guilty of what would be cruelty to animals, the law gave no redress. In the emancipation of women Mississippi led off, in 1839, New York following with its Married Women's Act of 1848, which has been since so enlarged and extended, and so generally adopted by the other states, that, for all purposes of business, ownership of property, and claim to her individual earnings, a married woman is to-day, in America, as independent as a man. In some respects we are still behind the Continental nations of Europe, which recognize the oneness of man and wife by providing that a husband shall not will away his property from the woman who has aided in its acquisition. That law, and the further one that a man shall not disinherit his children without just cause, both derived from the jurisprudence of Rome, will come in time; but for no such reforms, either past or present, need we look to English precedents.

With the law we may close for the present our comparison of English and American institutions. The contrast between them is so striking that the derivation of one from the other seems almost incredible. Nor is this contrast the result of any recent change in either country. As we have seen, it reaches back to the first settlement of New England, and has developed simply on its original lines. Here the spirit of the institutions has always pointed to equality and the elevation of all classes through the machinery of the government. In England, on the other hand, with rare exceptions until very modern times, the government has been conducted in the interest of the so-called upper classes—that is,

the few persons whose ancestors took possession of the land, the church, the machinery of the courts, the legislature, and the executive, and those who, in later days, have acquired wealth by trade.* The people have never been recognized, except for the few years when the Puritans held sway. The striking fact to-day is, that the masses are rising up, and are bound to make their long-buried grievances acknowledged. The new England to be evolved from the coming change may not be so picturesque; for vast estates and lordly castles, set off by moss-covered noisome hovels and troops of beggars, do certainly form picturesque objects in a landscape; but the general happiness, the object of modern civilization, may be the gainer.†

Much we owe to England, and the debt will never be ignored or outlawed. We have her vigorous language, are sharers of her noble literature, have many of her customs and modes of thought, and claim to inherit some of her indomitable energy, practical sagacity, habits of organization, and general love of fair play and open speech. In little things, too, often regarded as peculiar to America, we are only preserving old English forms and customs. For example, when a vigilance committee in the South or West decorate an obnoxious stranger with a coat of tar and feathers, they

---

* One of these rare exceptions occurred in the reign of Henry VIII., who, however he may have trampled on the rich and powerful, endeared himself to the people at large, to an extent which the present generation find it difficult to understand, by his protection of the poor. Gneist's "Hist. of the English Constitution," ii. 187.

† The coming change in England will probably be a peaceful one, for the practical Englishmen, unlike some of their neighbors, have a happy faculty of solving political problems when their solution becomes imperative.

are only exercising a form of English hospitality practised in the seventeenth century.* When the Yankee says "I guess," he is but using the English of Chaucer and Shakespeare.† So when he speaks of "fall" instead of autumn, he is following Dryden.‡ In calling a person "homely" instead of plain, he has the warrant of Milton.§ So "whittle" is found to be old;‖ "slick" also,¶ "freshet," ** and many other so-called Americanisms.

There is no danger of the reader's underestimating the influence of England upon America, or the great virtues of the English people. But these subjects, important as they are in themselves, have no bearing upon the question which I have undertaken to discuss — the origin of our republican institutions. These institutions have moulded, and will serve hereafter to mould, the nation's life. The questions how and whence they came to America should interest not alone the scholar, but every one who cares for the future of his country. The past holds for us something beyond the mere pleasure of a romance. It lays before us as a lesson the experi-

---

* Int. to Lowell's "Biglow Papers," vol. ii.

† "Of twenty yere of age he was, I gesse."—Chaucer.

"Better far, I guess,
That we do make our entrance several ways."
"1st Part Henry VI.," act ii. sc. 1.

‡ "What crowds of patients the town doctor kills;
Or how last fall he raised the weekly bills."

§ "It is for homely features to keep home.
They had their name hence."—Milton, "Comus."

‖ In "Hakewith on Providence," 1627, given by Johnson.

¶ Used by Chapman, 1603, Sir Thomas Browne, and Fuller.

** "All fish from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook."—Milton.

ence of other nations; of those alone who have the sagacity to profit by that experience can it be said that "histories make men wise."

The method in which this subject has been heretofore generally treated is familiar to every reader, and it is a method which has at least the merit of simplicity, obviating the necessity of all original investigation. Looking back at American literature, we find that, to all questions regarding the origin of our un-English institutions, the stock-answer has been returned, that they were invented by those mysterious and inspired prophetic souls who founded Massachusetts. Of all the fabled heroes of antiquity, architects of empires, or benefactors of the human race, none, in popular opinion, have ever equalled in depth of thought and fecundity of invention the plain artisans and farmers who crossed the ocean in the *Mayflower*, or those who followed them in the next few years. What a marvellous magician's bath the Atlantic must have been two centuries and a half ago, when even a sail across its waters could work such miracles! If any other nation succeeds in originating a single great institution in an ordinary lifetime, it gains historic fame. In this case, the mere voyage from England sufficed, we are expected to believe, for the invention of at least three of the first magnitude.

At the head of the list stands the free-school system of the United States. For this claim we have the authority of James Russell Lowell, who calls it the invention of our Puritan ancestors in Massachusetts.* The second is the township system. This also originated in the same quarter, according to Palfrey, the historian of New Eng-

* Essay on "New England Two Hundred Years Ago," Among My Books.

land.* The third is the system of recording deeds and mortgages. This also is claimed to have been devised in America, presumably in Massachusetts.† As the settlers of New England certainly did possess these important institutions, while the Englishmen at home as certainly did not, the inference that they were invented in America is a natural one, if we set out with the assumption that England is the only other country in the world. However, a little light is thrown upon the subject when we learn that free schools existed, not only among the Romans, but among the Moors nine centuries ago; that the township system prevailed in Central Asia probably before the dispersion of the human race, and now exists in upper India; and that deeds were recorded in Egypt long before the Christian era.

These are but specimens of American institutions, and simple illustrations of the ordinary mode of dealing with their history by modern writers, for we may notice that our ancestors never made such claims. Some persons might think that it was characteristic Yankee tall-talk, indulged in only among uneducated people, to credit their origin to Massachusetts and to transplanted Englishmen; but this, as we have already seen, is incorrect. Most English and all American histories have been written after the same model.‡

---

* i. 275.

† "New American Cyclopædia," article "Recording."

‡ Another example will illustrate this even more fully. In 1836, Edward Everett delivered an address in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Harvard College. Referring to the appropriation by the General Court of Massachusetts of the sum of four hundred pounds for the establishment of that institution, he said: "I must appeal to gentlemen around me, whether before the year 1636 they know of such a thing as a grant of money

In all this there is nothing remarkable; for to persons accustomed from early education never to look beyond Great Britain for anything American, our institutions, when not recognized as English, may well seem to be original. In addition is the fact that such a mode of dealing with one's ancestors has, until a recent date, seemed patriotic among all nations. It is to be hoped, however, that to the present generation, extending its researches in all directions, these institutions will not be less dear or less important because found to have about them some of the halo of republican antiquity, reaching back further than the voyage of the immortal *Mayflower*.

We speak of this as the "new world," but geologically it is the old. Modern scientists, in studying the records furnished by the rocks, have discovered that it was in being when Europe was submerged beneath the waves.

---

by the English House of Commons to found or endow a place of education. I think there is no such grant before that period, nor till long after; and therefore I believe it is strictly within the bounds of truth to say that the General Court of Massachusetts, which met in September, 1636, is the first body in which the people by their representatives ever gave their own money to found a place of education." The same kind of language was used at the 250th anniversary in 1886. No such thing being known in England, therefore it never existed. We shall see hereafter how, half a century before the time of which Mr. Everett spoke, the people of Holland, through their representatives, had given all the buildings and a magnificent endowment for the establishment of two free universities, one of which (that of Leyden) is among the most distinguished in the world. Many of the men who settled in Massachusetts came from Leyden, and Harvard College itself was established on land settled by colonists led by Thomas Hooker, a refugee English preacher who had lived in Holland for three years. Strange enough such language as that of the Governor of Massachusetts would have sounded to the men who made the grant of four hundred pounds.

So of our system of government. The political movements of the last century have worked such changes across the ocean that to-day the Constitution of the United States is almost the oldest in existence outside of Asia. But our leading institutions go back much further. When historians come to study them, as they have studied dynasties, they will find that here also America is the old and much of Europe the new barbaric world. In the construction of the republic, our fathers had the same advantages which a man of fortune possesses who sets out to build a new house. Although not rich in gold, they were the heirs of all the wisdom of the ages. They were hampered by no old structure to be modernized, and by no old materials to be put to use. A continent lay before them on which to build; the whole world was their quarry, and all the past their architects. They showed marvellous skill, wisdom, and foresight in the selection of their plans, in the choice of their materials, and in their methods of construction. All this is honor enough, without endowing them with the lamp of an Aladdin or the wand of a magician.

Taking the word in its broad sense, the institutions of America are largely Puritan, so that we must look to the growth of Puritanism to understand their introduction. But when we seek for their origin, we should send our thoughts far beyond the little island of England or the narrow confines of Massachusetts. National institutions are like great trees standing in a field, which, though showing only a trunk and branches above the surface, have another frame as large spreading through the soil below. Those of America shelter to-day over sixty million people. Their roots are too large to be contained in any one small quarter of the globe.

Two great elements have contributed to make Amer-

ica what it is: one, the civilization of ancient Rome, with its genius for government and its instinct for justice and equal rights; the other, the strong wild blood of the Germanic race, with its passion for individual freedom, which has given nerve, energy, and strength to modern Europe. The first of these elements was utterly extinguished in England by the Anglo-Saxon conquest, while the feudal system afterwards came in to rob the Germanic conquerors of many of their early ideas regarding civil liberty.

One country alone in Northern Europe was largely free from both this devastation and this blight. There the civilization of Rome was never extinguished, and the feudal system took but feeble root. The people were of Germanic blood, and preserved more purely than any others their Germanic ideas and institutions; but engrafted on them were the arts, the learning, and the laws derived from communication with civilized and civilizing Italy. To the patriot, to the lover of civil and religious liberty, as well as to the student of art and science in any land, the history of this republican country must always have a peculiar charm. But, apart from its general features, this history is so interwoven with that of England and America that any one concerned with the past of either of these countries will find it a subject of unfailing interest.

When modern Englishmen set out to write the history of their country, they cross the Channel and describe the Angles and the Saxons in their early home upon the Continent.* That home was so near to the Netherlands that the people of Holland and the conquerors of Britain

---

* See Green's "Making of England," Stubb's "Constitutional History," etc.

spoke substantially the same language, and were almost of one blood. To the Englishman, thinking only of the greatness of his own land, this original relationship may seem sufficient honor for a tiny fragment of the earth's surface not as large as Switzerland, but it is only the first chapter of the story. For hundreds of years in later times, and until long after the settlement of America, the Netherlands stood as the guide and instructor of England in almost everything which has made her materially great. When the Reformation came in which Northwestern Europe was new-born, it was the Netherlands which led the van, and for eighty years waged the war which disenthralled the souls of men. Out of that conflict, shared by thousands of heroic Englishmen, but in which England as a nation hardly had a place, Puritanism was evolved—the Puritanism which gave its triumph to the Netherland Republic, and has shaped the character of the English-speaking race.

In time, England came to hate the benefactor to whom she owed so much, and some of her people have repaid their debt in a manner not uncommon in such cases. Thus, after the Restoration of the Stuarts, and still more after the Tory reaction which followed the Revolution of 1688, the political writers about the court habitually ridiculed the Dutchmen for virtues which they could not understand. The republican Hollander thought it a disgrace to have his wife or daughter debauched by a king or noble. The courtiers about Charles II. viewed this subject differently, and regarded the Dutchman as ill-mannered for his want of taste.*

* In Holland, where he passed part of his days of exile, Charles and his courtiers were constantly and openly rebuked for their licentious and profligate habits. These rebukes were as little relished

Added to this were the Hollander's respect for the private rights of all classes; his devotion to art and learning; his love of fair dealing in personal and in public matters; his industry, frugality; and, finally, his universal toleration. A man with these traits of character, although sympathetic with the English Puritan on many points, was hardly comprehensible to the ruling classes in England two centuries and a half ago. No one could deny the Dutchmen's courage, for they were among the boldest soldiers and sailors that the world has ever seen; but they were not gentlemen from the aristocratic point of view.

As for the Englishmen of the Restoration, one little incident will illustrate what they thought high breeding. Sir William Temple, as is well known, was one of the most elegant and accomplished gentlemen at the Court of Charles II.—a wit among the courtiers, and a courtier among the wits.* Being sent as ambassador to The Hague, he fortunately jotted down some of his experiences, and among others the following. Dining one day with the Chief Burgomaster of Amsterdam, and having a severe cold, he noticed that every time he spit on the floor, while at table, a tight, handsome wench, who stood in a corner holding a cloth, got down on her knees and wiped it up. Seeing this, he turned to his host and apologized for the trouble which he gave, receiving the jocular response, "It is well for you that

---

and as little forgiven by the "merry monarch" as was the stern discipline to which he was subjected in Scotland during his early life. Rogers's "Story of Holland," p. 257; Davies, iii. 12. No reader needs to be reminded how many of the noble families of England are descended from illegitimate scions of royalty, and how they prize their ancestry.

* Macaulay's Essays, "Sir William Temple."

my wife is not home, for she would have turned you out of the house for soiling her floor, although you are the English ambassador." This incident, he says, "illustrates the authority of women in Holland." That it conveyed no other lesson to his mind gives us a better idea of the manners of the English upper classes two centuries ago than pages of description.* Hallam, writing of England in the time of Elizabeth, says: "Hypocritical adulation was so much among the vices of that age, that the want of it passed for rudeness." † It was this form of rudeness in the Hollander, and not what would be called bad manners to-day, that was found objectionable by the English.

When we now remember that England and Holland became commercial rivals, and that England has never scrupled at anything to crush out a competitor, we need not wonder at the national prejudice towards the Dutchman, whose virtues, developed under a republic, were a standing protest against a government for the upper classes alone. In 1673, Chancellor Shaftesbury, in an address to Parliament, summed up the whole case against Holland. It was an enemy of all monarchies, especially the English; their only competitor in commerce and naval power, and the chief obstacle to the universal dominion which England should aim at: *Delenda esto Carthago.* Such a government must be destroyed.‡

Such, in brief outline, is the origin of the Englishman's antipathy to the Dutch; an antipathy which in great

* "Memoirs of what Passed in Christendom from 1672 to 1679," Sir William Temple's Works, ii. 458. See also Fellthams's "Resolves;" "Observations on the Low Countries," 12th ed. (London, 1709), p. 609.

† "Const. Hist." i. 277.

‡ "Parlt. Hist." vol. iv. col. 504, cited by Davies.

measure had led to a general disparagement of this people, and thus to obscuring the truth of history; although to such an exhibition of national prejudice there have always been illustrious exceptions.*

That the American of English descent should, in former times, have shown some of this prejudice is in no ways remarkable, since he knew little of the facts. But his indulgence in the disparagement at the present day, when all the records are accessible, is a very different matter, for it is to the country of this republican people,

---

* What some of the able Englishmen of the seventeenth century thought of them will be shown in a late chapter. As to those of modern times, the first whom we may notice is Samuel Rogers, the poet. He, in the notes to his "Italy," pays a high tribute to the Dutch Republic, as superior to Venice, saying that it produced "not only the greatest seamen, but the greatest lawyers, the greatest physicians, the most accomplished scholars, the most skilful painters, and statesmen as wise as they were just." Hallam, an able and certainly not a prejudiced judge, says that Holland, "at the end of the sixteenth century and for many years afterwards, was pre-eminently the literary country of Europe," and all through the seventeenth century was the peculiarly learned country also. The Dutch were "a great people, a people fertile of men of various ability and erudition, a people of scholars, of theologians and philosophers, of mathematicians, of historians, and we may add of poets."—Hallam's "Literature of Europe," iii. 278, iv. 59. Macaulay, writing of the period just before the English revolution of 1688, says that the aspect of Holland "produced on English travellers of that age an effect similar to the effect which the first sight of England now produces on a Norwegian or a Canadian." "History of England," chap. ii. Still fuller is the tribute of the last English writer upon Holland, a member of Parliament and a professor of political economy at Oxford. He claims that the revolt of the Netherlands and the success of Holland is the beginning of modern civilization, the Dutch having taught Europe nearly everything which it knows. "The Story of Holland," by James E. Thorold Rogers, pp. 10, 11.

in many respects so like his own, but so different from England, that he must turn if he would understand the making of the United States.

Nor is it only to the republicans of America or the students of the past that this country is of interest. The story of the rise and development of the Netherlands should be known to every one who cares about the political, social, and economic questions which now agitate the world. Does one wish to see what local self-government can do for a people, nowhere can he find a better example of its strength than in the cities which made up the great Netherland Republic. Does he, on the other hand, wish to see the weakness of a federation in which the general government does not deal directly with the citizen, but only with organic bodies of the State; nowhere, not even in the confederation which preceded our American Union, will he find a better illustration than that afforded by the same republic in its early days. When we turn to other questions, social and economic, a still broader field is opened up. The history of this country, when rightly understood, probably disposes of more popular delusions and throws more light upon the future of democracy than that of any other country in the world. However, as it has been the interest of the so-called upper classes to foster these delusions, perhaps we should not wonder at the little attention bestowed upon this history.

What, for example, becomes of the standing arguments for an aristocracy and for men of leisure when we turn on them the light from Holland? English writers are accustomed to tell us that art and science owe their encouragement to the existence of the noble orders, and that but for their example fine manners and

lofty thought would vanish from the earth. Nowhere can be found a better illustration of the defective reasoning which draws general conclusions from insufficient data. In England, this has appeared to be the fact, because in that country the aristocracy have largely absorbed the wealth and education which enable men to foster art and science. Yet England, until a very recent day at least, has done almost nothing for art, and in science and deep scholarship could never be compared with Holland in her palmy days. But Holland owed her pre-eminence in these departments, not to an aristocracy, nor even to a moneyed class whose inherited wealth led them to abstain from business. The men who sustained her painters and musicians, who fostered science and broad learning, were the plain burghers in the cities, merchants, and manufacturers, men whom Queen Elizabeth called "base mechanicals," who all worked themselves, and by example or by precept taught that labor alone is honorable. In this connection a single incident will show how mathematics were cultivated in the Netherlands.

In 1617, a young French soldier, serving in the Dutch army, was passing through the streets of Breda. A crowd was gathered on a corner, and he pushed forward to learn the cause of the excitement. Its members were all studying a paper posted on a wall, and talking about its contents. As he did not understand the language, he asked a by-stander to translate it for him into French or Latin. The paper contained an abstruse mathematical problem, which in this way had been submitted to the public for solution. The soldier obtained his translation, went to his quarters, and a few days afterwards sent in the correct answer, signed "Descartes." This was the introduction to the world of the greatest philos-

opher and mathematician of the age, whose transcendent ability was at once recognized in Holland.* Can the reader imagine such an occurrence as this in the England of the Stuarts? A crowd might have gathered there to see a bull-baiting or a dog-fight, but never to study a problem in mathematics.

As for the nobility of character and loftiness of thought supposed to be encouraged by an hereditary aristocracy, the contrast is no less striking. When Elizabeth sent a little army to the Netherlands to assist in the war with Spain, there was hardly one of her captains, no matter how high his rank, who did not swindle in his pay-rolls, until Prince Maurice detected and stopped the fraud.† As for the nobles at home, under Elizabeth and her successor, many of them who bore the most illustrious names, and occupied the highest social position, were then, like their descendants for generations afterwards, always up for sale. They took bribes from every quarter, even from the enemy, and never seemed to suffer in the public estimation when detected.‡ How, during the war in the Netherlands, some of her officers sold out the fortresses committed to their charge, and how Elizabeth herself was always attempting to betray her Protestant allies, we shall see hereafter.

Turning now to Holland, republican Holland, the country of the "base mechanicals," the opposing record is a very brief one. Never in war or peace, though Spain was lavish of promises and a master of corruption, was a native Hollander bought with gold.§ The

---

* "John de Witt," by James Geddes, p. 35.

† Motley's "United Netherlands," iii. 98, 99.

‡ Ibid., iv. 480, etc.

§ Davies's "Holland," ii. 656.

Dutch officials were of a class very different from that encountered at the English Court. When, in 1608, the Spanish ambassadors were on their way to negotiate a treaty at The Hague, they saw eight or ten persons land from a little boat, and, sitting down on the grass, make a meal of bread and cheese and beer. "Who are these travellers?" said the Spaniards to a peasant. "They are the deputies from the States," he answered, "our sovereign lords and masters." "Then we must make peace," they cried; "these are not men to be conquered!"*

It was not alone upon the land, nor among the upper classes, that we mark the contrast between the English and Dutch ideas of official honesty. In 1656, two Spanish treasure-ships were captured by Cromwell's navy. They were said to have contained about a million sterling, but when brought into port two thirds of the booty was missing, having been stolen by the officers and men. One captain, it was reported, secured about sixty thousand pounds.† In 1628, the Dutch navy had also captured a Spanish treasure-fleet, containing silver and gold valued at over twelve million florins.‡ Bringing his prize into port and having turned over all the treasure to the government, Peterson Heyn, the admiral, who had begun life as a common sailor, was asked to name his own reward. He answered that he wished for no reward in money, having only done his duty to the State; but that he would like permission to retire to private life.§

---

* Voltaire, quoted in "Notes to Rogers's Italy."

† Guizot's "Cromwell," p. 370.

‡ About a million sterling.

§ Davies's "Holland," ii. 573. He was not permitted to retire, but was made lieutenant admiral, and two years later died gloriously in battle. He was buried at Delft, near William of Orange.

Such men as these, who were not exceptional, but only types, the English ruling classes understood as little as some of their descendants understood Washington and Lincoln when alive. Admiral De Ruyter, one of the greatest naval heroes of all time, who began life as a rope-maker, was found by the French Count de Guiche, on the morning after his four days' battle with the English fleet, feeding his chickens and sweeping out his cabin. William of Orange, when at the height of his authority, mingled with the common people, wearing the woollen waistcoat of a bargeman, and an old mantle which a student would have pronounced threadbare.* The naval commanders of England, who, in the main, were nothing more than pirates, looked down on the simple-minded Dutchmen, who wanted no reward but the consciousness of having done their duty. The courtiers around Elizabeth and her successors, who wore their fortunes on their backs, and thought any mode of getting money honorable except to labor for it, sneered at the republicans who hung the walls of their houses with the choicest paintings, cultivated music, studied science and the classics, and were the greatest soldiers and sailors of the age, but went about in plain clothing, dispensed exact justice to poor and rich alike, cared for the unfortunate, and frowned on idleness and vice. The world, however, has moved in the last three centuries, although this feeling has, in some quarters, not entirely disappeared.

In the preceding pages I have attempted to show how radically the leading institutions of America differ from those of England. To trace the origin of these insti-

---

* Taine, "Brooke's Sidney," p. 16 *et seq.*

tutions is to tell the story of Puritanism in the Netherlands, where the Puritan, with his centuries of civilization and self-government behind him, was of a very different type from his brother across the Channel. To show how they came to America is to tell the story of the English Puritan, much of which relating to his mental and moral environments, and the influences which shaped his character, giving it some unlovely features, never has been attempted.

These lines of investigation constantly cross each other; for the period of the great struggle for civil and religious liberty in the Netherlands, out of which the Puritan in Holland was evolved, also gave birth to the English Puritan, and to the settlement of what is now the United States. It is only by looking at the whole story together, and keeping in mind the connection of its different parts, that we can understand how the American Republic, the foundations of which were laid by the Pilgrim Fathers, was influenced by its prototype on the other side of the Atlantic. I hope, therefore, that the reader will pardon me if in some places I lead him over familiar fields, although my path, especially in England, will present views somewhat different from those generally given by historians.*

---

* To some readers it may appear that in my early chapters too much space has been given to the affairs of the Netherlands, which Motley is supposed to have made familiar to the public. This criticism might have more force if I could assume that all my readers would be fresh from the study of Motley's works. But even among historical scholars I am inclined to think that many have had an experience like mine. When I read "The Rise of the Dutch Republic," at its first appearance, I thought many portions of it too highly colored. The author did not, to my satisfaction, explain why this

people should exhibit such heroic traits of character, and develop so high a form of civilization as compared with that of their contemporaries in other lands. These questions, perhaps, seemed of little materiality to the historian who, from the original records, was writing the story of a single epoch. For my purposes, however, it has been necessary to go back of the inception of the struggle with Spain, and to seek out the origin and nature of the national institutions and characteristics which gave strength to the insurgents, developed their civilization, and led to their influence on England and America. In doing this, I have become fully satisfied of the substantial fidelity of Motley's narrative, while I have also become convinced that the comparatively little effect produced by his works on modern historical thought, as shown in the histories of other countries, especially those of England and America, is largely due to the absence of what he has omitted. Some of these omissions I have attempted to supply, and, to make the result at all intelligible, the repetition of a portion of the narrative has seemed to me essential.

CHAPTER I.

THE NETHERLANDS BEFORE THE WAR WITH SPAIN

THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE, AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, COMMERCE, AND ART

It has been customary among modern writers, when treating of the Puritans, to confine their use of the name to Englishmen or their descendants in America. But the word, when first originated, had no such restricted meaning. It came into the English language during the early days of Elizabeth, and was constantly employed throughout the reigns of the first two Stuarts. Its meaning in the country of its origin was changed from time to time, but it was always applied to a type of man which was not peculiar to England.* Hence it was that, while Elizabeth and James I. were on the throne, men in Holland were called Puritans, both by Hollanders and Englishmen, equally with men of the same class in England; and in modern times Motley has used the name in the same manner.† Supported by these precedents, I have in this work given to the words Puritan and Puritanism a broader significance than that usually accorded to them.

---

* See Preface, p. ix. When I come to consider the development of English Puritanism, I shall show how the name originated, and what meanings were attached to it at various periods.

† Motley's "United Netherlands," ii. 123; "Life of Barneveld," ii. 119, 284, 285.

In many of his characteristics the Puritan was as old as history itself. In almost every clime and age men have stood up to advocate reforms, and by their lives to protest against the immorality and corruption of the society about them. But the peculiar characteristic of the Puritan, distinguishing him from prior reformers in Church or State, was his religious belief. He was the child of the Reformation, and it is therefore to the teachings of the Reformation that we must look for his origin.

But although the Reformation produced the Puritan, it wrought no miracle in the nature of the men whom it affected. If it found them ignorant and narrow-minded, it did not at once make them learned and liberal in their ideas. On the contrary, its first effects were rather in the opposite direction, intensifying some of their natural failings. Like all other great spiritual revolutions, it took men as it found them, and developed them on their original lines. In the end it broadened their ideas, and, by teaching them the equality of man in the eyes of his Creator, led up to the lesson of human equality on earth. But such lessons bear their fruit very slowly; and had the world waited until their development in England, its modern harvest might have been long deferred.

The Puritan of England followed, but after a considerable interval, his prototype in Holland. He borrowed from Holland many of the ideas and institutions which he attempted to introduce into England, and with which he succeeded in the United States. Although in each country he was the product of the Reformation, it was the Reformation engrafted on the past. It is therefore to their respective pasts that we must look if we would understand why the Puritans of Holland differed so widely from those of England, and how the one came to affect the other. To the American of English descent

such an examination should be of peculiar interest, for in tracing the development of the Hollanders, he is not following the records of an alien race. They were of substantially the same blood as his English ancestors; so that, in comparing the past of the two, he is simply seeing how his own kith and kin developed under the influence of different natural environments and different institutions.

Beginning now with the country of the elder and more matured civilization, let us first consider the influences which shaped the character of the Puritan of the Netherlands. Following this we shall, in these early chapters, see something of the struggle with Spain, in which that character was developed, down to the time when the Puritans of England came under the direct influence of their brethren across the Channel.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, the Netherlands, or Low Countries, as they were often called, consisted of seventeen separate provinces, which together covered a territory about half the size of England. As the result of their great revolt from Spain, this little tract of land was divided into two nearly equal portions. The ten southern Catholic provinces, now composing Belgium, continued under their foreign ruler. The northern seven, which were Protestant, by the most remarkable war in history—a war waged by sea and land for eighty years—were welded into the great Dutch Republic, called the United Netherlands, and sometimes Holland, after the name of the largest state of the confederacy. This republic, with its thirteen thousand square miles of surface, formed but a patch upon the map of Europe: England alone is four times as large, Great Britain and Ireland ten times, France nearly twenty, Europe three hundred; Switzerland is larger; historic Greece was half as large again.

The improvements of modern science, especially in the machinery of war, together with the general progress of society, have a tendency to equalize men, and give countries rank according to their size and population. It therefore seems strange to us that within three centuries the world should have been led by a people who occupied so minute a subdivision of its surface. The first glance at the character of their country would have a tendency to add to this surprise, for, picturing it as it appeared in early days, one would ask how man ever reduced it to subjection. Then, however, would follow the thought that a race which could conquer this cross between the earth and the sea might, with one element in either hand, easily control the world.

The Netherlands are largely composed of the alluvial deposit of the Meuse, the Scheldt, and the Rhine. For countless ages these rivers poured into the German Ocean the soil of France and Germany, building up the mainland, as the Nile has done in the Mediterranean, and the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico. The sea in return cast up its dunes and sand-banks. Back of these, and behind the hardening slime which the rivers heaped up from side to side as they straggled on their course, most of the country was a broad morass. Here and there were islands which seemed to float on the surface of the ooze, tracts of brushwood, forests of pine, oak, and alder, while tempestuous lakes filled in the picture. Along the coast appeared a succession of deep bays and gulfs, through which the Northern Ocean swept in resistless fury. At length, the wearied rivers appear to have given up the contest, and lost themselves, wandering helplessly amid the marshes. Then man took up the struggle. Little by little the land was rescued; dikes chained the ocean and curbed the rivers in their

channels; lakes were emptied, canals furrowed, and even the soil itself created.

In this warfare with the elements, the brunt of the contest fell on the hollow-land, or Holland. It had no iron—in fact, no metal of any kind—for tools, and no stone for houses or for dikes. Even wood was wanting, for the early forests had been destroyed by tempests. To this country nature seemed to have denied nearly all her gifts; so that, almost disinherited at birth, it stands a vast monument to the courage, industry, and energy of an indomitable people. From end to end it is to-day a frowning fortress, keeping watch and ward against its ancient enemy, the sea.* In great part it lies below the water level. Even now inundations ever threaten ruin. One who has seen the North Sea in a fury can imagine what such perils were in the earlier days when science was in its infancy. Time after time whole districts have been submerged, cities swallowed up—twenty, eighty, a hundred thousand persons disappearing in a night. So marked have been the transformations from this cause that a map of Holland as it existed eight hundred years ago would not be recognized to-day.†

---

* The coast of Harlem is protected by a dike of Norway granite, five miles in length and forty feet in height, which is buried two hundred feet beneath the waves. Amsterdam is built entirely on piles, frequently thirty feet long. The foundations of every town and village in Friesland are artificial constructions. It is estimated that seven and a half billions of francs have been expended on protective work between the Scheldt and the Dollart. Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," pp. 39, 40.

† *Edinburgh Review*, Oct., 1847, p. 426; "Holland and its People," De Amicis; Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," Durand's transl., p. 38, and authorities cited. This change has been going on in the whole of the Netherlands. For example, Ghent was a seaport in the ninth century, and Bruges in the twelfth.

Still, man remained the conqueror. On this patch of manufactured earth was realized the boast of Archimedes. The little republic, just come to maturity when America was settled, vanquished and well-nigh destroyed the mightiest military power of Europe. Shortly afterwards, it met the combined forces of Charles II. and Louis XIV. of France. As a colonizer it ranks second to England alone, reaching out to Java, Sumatra, Hindostan, Ceylon, New Holland, Japan, Brazil, Guiana, the Cape of Good Hope, the West Indies, and New York. To-day the waste which the ancients looked on as uninhabitable is among the most fertile, the wealthiest, and most populous regions of the world; its people stand the foremost in Europe for general intelligence and purity of morals.*

It is very evident that these Netherlanders must have had a remarkable history. That history can only be understood by always bearing in mind the natural surroundings and conditions of existence in this peculiar land. The destinies of every people are determined, to a great extent, by the soil, climate, and geographical configuration of their country; but these influences differ in intensity, and hence in the manner and rapidity, with which they accomplish great results. Thus it is that the question of geographical situation becomes of more importance in the history of some nations than in that of others, although this truth is not always given its due prominence.

For example, the whole story of the English people centres around the fact that they have lived in an island

---

* Proportions considered, there are fewer persons in Holland ignorant of the alphabet than in Prussia. "Holland and its People," De Amicis, p. 157, Amer. ed.

fortress, where, since the Norman Conquest, they have been secure from Continental invasion and left to work out their own problems substantially undisturbed. Such a position of separation from the elder nations of the Continent has had its marked advantages, developing the love of country and liberty, the self-confidence, and the practical sagacity for which the Englishman has always been distinguished. To it is also largely due the vast accumulated wealth which has made this little island the treasury of the world. But, on the other hand, the very isolation which has had such beneficent results, with the security from reprisals which has made her wide-spread spoliations possible, lies at the bottom of many of her great defects. The gigantic moat which separates her from the rest of Europe has kept out much of good as well as of evil influence. Had it been closed three or four centuries ago by one of nature's mighty convulsions, England would fill a very different place on the historic page.

The history of the Netherlands furnishes perhaps even a better illustration of the influence of environment in shaping a people's life. Certainly the points at which their conditions of existence differed from those of the English, and the effects produced by these natural differences, form very suggestive subjects for a student. We have already seen something as to the character of the soil, and the mode in which it has been created and preserved. Now take a map of the country, and we shall see that on two sides it is bounded by the German Ocean, and on the other two by France and Germany. More than this, the latter boundaries are not made up of natural barriers; they are simply lines upon the map, passing through level districts and intersected by great rivers. Here, then, we must pause for a moment and

see how the geographical factor has influenced this people.

Although the sea-coast stretched along but two sides of the country, it was one perhaps even more favorable to primitive commerce than that of England, for its indentations and the limitless extensions furnished by its river channels afforded innumerable refuges against the pirates, who were in former ages the chief enemies of trade. This relation to the sea made the people, like the English, from the earliest time a race of sailors. But the inland connection with the other European peoples was at first even more important. Most of the early commerce was carried on by the rivers, and by the old Roman roads which led from Italy. Through these arteries flowed the civilizing streams, which, though at times quite faint in their pulsations, never ceased their vivifying work. Here was an element almost entirely wanting in England; of its importance we shall see more hereafter. Suffice it now to say that everywhere in the commerce, manufactures, arts, institutions, and laws of the Netherlands, we find traces of this connection with ancient and modern Italy.

Still, this situation, with three great rivers flowing through the country to the ocean, and with roads leading out in all directions, favorable as it was for trade in times of peace, was one calculated to invite attack in times of war. Having no ocean barriers like those of England, no mountain ranges like the Alps or Apennines, no rocky fastnesses like those of Switzerland, the Low Countries have in all ages been subject to the incursions of their lawless neighbors. The "Cockpit of Europe" is the name given to this region in modern days, from the number of battles which have been fought upon its soil. To the enormous war expenses

thrust upon them from their exposed position is largely due the comparative decline of these once all-powerful and wealthy provinces.

At first glance it seems strange that under such conditions the Netherlands ever secured a foothold among the powers of the earth. But before the invention of gunpowder revolutionized the art of war, the subject of national defence was a quite different one from that presented in later days. The fact is, that the absence of natural barriers and mountain retreats became one main cause of the power and prosperity of the people of this country during and at the close of the Middle Ages. Men for whom nature or fortune has done much, even in the way of protection against their enemies, are too often inclined to rely on these advantages rather than on themselves. Here, however, where nature had done nothing, the men became self-reliant. They built their own fortresses, covering the land with walled towns which developed into great cities, where each man, whether an artisan or gentle-born, was trained to the use of arms. To the existence of these towns, and to the formation of the country, the Netherlands owed their peculiar exemption from the blighting influence of the feudal system, which checked civilization in so great a part of Europe. The cities with their narrow, tortuous streets, and a country the soil of which was largely a morass, and all intersected by canals, arms of the sea, and rivers, afforded little scope for the movements of mounted knights and their retainers.

Still greater has been the influence of another feature of their geographical position. Manufactures and commerce brought wealth, and with it luxury, love of art, and learning, but, especially in Holland, little of the enervation which usually follows in their train. In most

lands accumulated wealth has bred a disinclination to labor, fostering a leisured class, the great curse of a community. But here the time has never come when men could sit down and say their work was finished, and that they would enjoy life in ease. Before them has ever stood the sea, daily and hourly threatening their existence. Their fathers made the land, but they have preserved it only by incessant labor. A little crevice in their dikes, unnoticed for a few hours, might devastate a district. Even with the most watchful care, no man can go to bed at night assured that in the morning he will find his possessions safe.

These conditions of life in the Netherlands must always be remembered if we would understand their history. The constant struggle for existence, as in all cases when the rewards are great enough to raise men above biting, sordid penury, strengthens the whole race, mentally, morally, and physically. Again, labor here has never been selfish and individual. To be effective it requires organization and direction. Men learn to work in a body and under leaders. A single man laboring on a dike would accomplish nothing; the whole population must turn out and act together. The habits thus engendered extend in all directions. Everything is done in corporations. Each trade has its guild, elects its own officers, and manages its own affairs. The people are a vast civic army, subdivided into brigades, regiments, and companies, all accustomed to discipline, learning the first great lesson of life, obedience.

On the other hand, this daily contest with nature, the regularity of life thus enforced, and the attention to minute details essential to existence, crush out the romantic spirit which makes some nations so picturesque. We find among them none of the wild chants of other

Northern people. No poet sings to them of goblins and fairy sprites. Their world is inhabited by actualities, and not by witches or the spirits of dead heroes. Hence they were never highly poetical, as the English were until after the time of Shakespeare, when they too became a race of manufacturers and merchants. They are not contemplative philosophers, like the Germans; they dwell in no abstractions and indulge in little sentiment. Life here below has been their study: how to improve the condition of man on this planet; how to make the home attractive by art, music, flowers, and social recreations; how to dispense justice to rich and poor alike, relieve the unfortunate, and give every one an equal chance in life; how to protect the oppressed from other lands, keeping the conscience as well as the body free; how to teach the world that men can be rich without insolence, poor without discontent, learned without pride, artistic without corruption, earnest in religion without bigotry. This is honor enough. Had these people also produced a Homer, a Dante, or a Shakespeare, they would have been a miracle and not a growth.

But there is something more than soil, climate, and natural surroundings which determines a nation's history. All men under the same conditions will not reach the same result. Great is the influence of environment, but great also is the mysterious influence of race. Place a people of one blood on the American continent, and they remain wandering tribes of painted hunters. Replace them with men of another breed, and the land in less than three centuries is covered with cities, fretted with railroads, and groaning under the wealth of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. The natural conditions are the same; it is only the human factor which has been changed.

In the history of the Netherlands this human factor forms an interesting study. It is evident that upon such a soil none of the weak and puny races of the earth could ever have gained a foothold. Once there, and settled in their habitations, they would be greatly moulded by the natural surroundings; but the first struggle required the foremost blood which the world has ever known. Even beyond this, the influence of race is so persistent that we shall find it all through their history, shaping the character and institutions of this people; so that when at last, after fifteen centuries, the seventeen provinces, living under much the same conditions, are divided into two equal parts, differing in religion and form of government, the line of cleavage follows nearly that of the earliest race divisions noticed by the Romans.

Who, then, were the people that wrested this land from the ocean and gave it fertility and wealth? What amphibious race, half beaver, half man, first occupied the primeval morasses which now compose the Netherlands we do not know. Our earliest account of the country is derived from Cæsar, and it is supplemented by that of Tacitus, who seems to have been particularly interested in its people. According to tradition, the aborigines had been swept away about a century before our era. However this may be, the historic scene opens with the advent of the Romans, and at that time the face of the country was almost unchanged by the hand of man. To us, therefore, the races which the Romans found in occupation may stand as the first occupants; and when we come to see their character, we shall comprehend the second great factor in the history of their descendants.

When Julius Cæsar swept over Western Europe on his meteoric career of conquest, he found this land occupied by tribes whose peculiar valor historians and

poets have made immortal. The Rhine formed nearly the division boundary between those of Gallic and those of Germanic blood. On its southern bank dwelt the Belgæ, whom he named the bravest of the Gauls. There he "overcame the Nervii," who died, but would not surrender. He annihilated them in a battle memorable in his marvellous campaigns—a battle where he himself fought like a common soldier in the ranks.

North of the Rhine, or rather on an island formed by two of its branches, he found a tribe of Teutonic origin, even more illustrious. These were the Batavians, whom Tacitus called the bravest of the Germans. The other barbarians were conquered and paid tribute to Rome; they simply became her allies, the tax-gatherer never setting foot upon their island, which now forms the heart of Holland.* As allies they earned an historic name. Cæsar cherished their cavalry as his favorite troops, and with them turned the tide of battle at Pharsalia. For over a century after his murder, the Batavian legion formed the imperial body-guard, making and unmaking emperors, and the Batavian island the base of operations against Britain, Gaul, and Germany.†

The Gallic and Germanic tribes who occupied respectively the southern and the northern portions of the Netherlands, now Belgium and Holland, differed widely in their characteristics. The men of either race were of gigantic stature, muscular, and inured to war; but there the resemblance largely ceased. The Gaul loved ornaments, decked himself in gay colors, and wore his yellow hair floating in the breeze. He liked society,

---

* Tacitus, "Germania," §§ 29, 30.

† Grattan's "Hist. of the Netherlands," p. 18; Motley's "Dutch Republic," i. 1–5.

and so dwelt in towns and villages, cultivating the soil. He was swift to anger, but easily appeased. Superstitious, he was priest-ridden, being governed mainly by the Druids. Unchaste, to him the marriage state was almost unknown. The German, on the other hand, was very simple in his costume. His fiery-red hair he bound up in a war-knot, heightening its color if nature had been too chary. Beyond this he wore no ornaments. He looked down on agriculture, and thought no pursuit honorable but that of arms. Less irascible than the Gaul, he held his anger longer and was capable of more continued conflict. Disliking society, he preferred to live alone under the broad sky, with one wife who was his companion in peace and war. No priest controlled his actions, but in the sacred groves he paid a simple homage to one almighty, unseen God.

In their civil organization also these races differed widely. Among the Gauls were three classes — the priests, nobility, and people; but the people, according to Cæsar, were all slaves. Clanship prevailed. The chief rulers were elected, but only the nobles participated in the choice. Among the Germans there was a simple and almost pure republic. Their kings and chiefs were elected by universal suffrage. The general assembly of the people chose the village magistrates, and decided all important questions. Minor affairs were regulated by what Americans would call town meeting, gatherings of all the men of a community. There was no private ownership of land, but annually certain farms were allotted by the magistrates for the cultivation of a single crop.*

* Motley's "Dutch Republic," i. 4–11. Green's "Making of England," chap. iv.

Thus, in their earliest historic period these two races stand out in marked contrast. Time has softened some of their primitive traits, while others have entirely disappeared; and yet to-day the Irishman, the Scotch Highlander, the Belgian, and the Frenchman show their Gallic blood, while the Germanic origin of the Englishman and the Hollander is no less apparent.*

In the Netherlands there was naturally a considerable intermingling of race. The Germans made their way into the southern provinces, giving to the people there something of a toughness of fibre unknown among the other Celts.† On the other hand, many thousands of the Flemings and Walloons, especially during the war with Spain, flocked into Holland, carrying with them a skill in the manufactures and the arts superior to that of their northern neighbors. Still, in the main, the southern provinces, which at last remained attached to Spain and the papacy, were peopled by Celts, and the northern ones which became Protestant and republican, by men of Germanic origin.

Of all the nations of Germanic descent, the Hollanders preserved most faithfully their ancestral spirit. The

---

* The Gauls were Celts of the same race as the inhabitants of Ireland and Britain. In Ireland, the Celtic blood has remained predominant; so it also has in Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland. In England, it gave way largely, some historians claim almost entirely, before the Anglo-Saxons. It is probable that even the Celts were not the original inhabitants of any of these countries. They had driven out the former occupants, and in the time of Cæsar were in turn being pushed on by the Germanic tribes who had reached the Rhine.

† Thus, for example, Charlemagne planted several thousand Saxon colonists on the west coast of Flanders. Hutton's "James and Philip Van Arteveld," p. 1.

early Batavians pass from history, but they melt into the Frisians, whose name is synonymous with liberty, nearest blood-relations of the Anglo-Saxon race. When Charlemagne established his dominion they came into the empire and accepted chiefs of his appointment, but they were still governed according to their own laws. The feudal system, which stifled liberty in so many regions, never was imposed on them. "The Frisians," said their statute-books, "shall be free as long as the wind blows out of the clouds, and the world stands."*

With the political history of the Netherlands down to the time of their great war with Spain, we need concern ourselves but little. It is sufficient for our purpose to briefly trace the general outline, and sketch some of the more salient features, the chief interest centring about the development of their material prosperity and the growth of their institutions. But before entering upon these subjects, one fact must be noticed which, often overlooked or not given its due prominence, furnishes the key to much of Continental as well as of English history during and just subsequent to the period which we call the Middle Ages.

When discussing the subject of the Roman civil law in the Introduction, a brief allusion was made to the high civilization attained by the Romans, and its influence on modern Europe. Hereafter, when we come to consider the history of England, we shall see how much of this civilization was introduced into Britain, and how it was utterly blotted out by the Anglo-Saxon conquerors. On the Continent, however, the overthrow

---

* Motley, i. 22. The Asega book, containing their statutes, is still extant.

of the old governments was followed by a very different condition of affairs. In Britain, the conquerors cleared the soil before them, supplanting the former occupants, and introducing their own language. The movement, though slow, taking a century and a half for its completion, was that of the avalanche carrying destruction in its path. In other parts of Europe, the conquerors settled down peaceably among the conquered, to a large extent adopted their life, and finally were themselves absorbed. Applying the test of speech, we see which race became predominant from the simple fact that the French, the Spanish, and the Italian tongues are the languages, not of the new-comers, the Franks, the Goths, and the Lombards, but of the people whom they found upon the soil. The effect in these countries was more like that of a river overflowing its banks; the waste may for a time seem universal, but when the flood subsides, the face of nature remains substantially unchanged.

It is this fact, the difference between the conquest of Britain and that of the Continent, which must be kept in view when we think of the Dark Ages which succeeded the barbarian irruption. They were very dark in England, which then received its modern name, and the gloom lasted there almost undisturbed for many centuries; but the hue was quite different upon the Continent, where the ancient civilization still survived. Looking through colored glasses, it is but natural to confuse the shading of the landscape. Hence the Englishman or American, if he would view the Middle Ages on the Continent aright, must disabuse his mind of many notions derived from reading English history alone.*

---

* "Parchment and paper, printing and engraving, improved glass and steel, gunpowder, clocks, telescopes, the mariner's compass, the

Let us now see if we can account in any measure for the high civilization which undoubtedly prevailed in the Netherlands at the time of their revolt from Spain. This is a question which has probably excited the interest of every one who has paid any attention to their history, for writers like Davies and Motley have left it substantially undiscussed, leading some critics to consider their descriptions overdrawn.

The first Germanic and Gallic inhabitants of this country must have learned much from Rome. As we have seen, the Batavian Island was for many years an important base of Roman military operations. Many of its natives held high posts in the imperial army, and brought home some of the culture of the capital. The Menapians, who occupied the present provinces of Flanders and Antwerp, also shared in the benefits of this connection. The remains of their ancient towns, discovered in places at present covered by the sea, often bring to light traces of Roman constructions and Latin inscriptions in honor of the Menapian divinities. Even at this period the Netherlanders were a maritime people, exporting salt to England, and salted meat (which was in high repute) to Italy. The men were handsome and richly clothed; and the land was well cultivated, and abounding in fruits, milk, and honey.* Later on, when the Roman empire went down, they had as near neighbors on the south the quick-witted Franks, and on the

---

reformed calendar, the decimal notation, algebra, trigonometry, chemistry, counterpoint—which was equivalent to a new creation of music—these are all possessions which we inherit from that which has been so disparagingly termed the stationary period."—Whewell's "History of the Inductive Sciences," i. 331. None of them, as every reader knows, came from England.

* Grattan, pp. 20–25.

east was Germany, the head of the renewed empire, still preserving some portion of the ancient civilization, and very soon to gain much more. There were to grow up the cities of the Hanseatic League, the pioneers of modern progress, of which famous confederation, formed in the thirteenth century, several of the towns of Holland were among the earliest members.*

But more important than all were the close relations which the Netherlands maintained with Italy. To appreciate the influence of this connection, it must be remembered that Italy never became barbarian. The race was not Teutonized; that is to say, not crushed and transformed to anything like the same degree as the people of the other European countries by the invasion of the northern tribes.†

In the end, the Italians might have shared the fate of their contemporaries, and have lost their civilization under the slow, brutalizing influence of the conquerors; but this disaster was largely averted by the results which followed in the train of the Crusades. In 1096,

---

* "The Hansa Towns," Zimmern, p. 214.

† "The barbarians established themselves on the soil temporarily or imperfectly. The Visigoths, the Franks, the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, all abandoned it or were soon driven away. If the Lombards remained there, they rapidly profited by the Latin culture. In the twelfth century the Germans, under Frederic Barbarossa, expecting to find men of their own race, were surprised to find them so Latinized, having discarded the fierceness of barbarians and taken from the influences of the air and soil something of Roman finesse and gentleness; having preserved the elegance of the language and the urbanity of primitive manners, even imitating the skill of the ancient Romans in the constitution of their cities and in the government of their public affairs. Latin is spoken in Italy up to the thirteenth century."—Taine's "Art in Italy," p. 28.

Peter the Hermit led out the first of the vast horde of visionary enthusiasts who for centuries poured into Asia Minor, whitening two continents with their bones in the chivalric attempt to redeem the holy sepulchre. These gigantic expeditions brought to the greater part of Europe only a fearful loss of life and property, compensated for mainly by the impoverishment of the nobles, which aided in breaking up the feudal system. Upon Italy, however, the effect was very different. There dwelt the head of the Church, who acted as guardian for all the pilgrims, regulated their movements, and levied a general tax on the faithful laity of Europe to sustain the wars against the infidels. This tax, known as Saladin's Tenth, poured an unfailing stream of treasure into Rome; while the people of all Italy were also acquiring wealth by furnishing the crusaders with supplies and transportation to the Holy Land.

Still more important, however, was the impetus given to commerce by this opening-up of the unknown regions of the East.* In 1295, Marco Polo, with his father and uncle, after an absence of nearly a quarter of a century, returned to Venice, bringing back their fairy tales of the wonders of far Cathay, and the whole of the Old World was spread out before these enterprising merchants. It was the commerce thus developed that built up the Italian republics, and bred the race of merchant princes who made the Italy of the Renaissance the mother of literature, art, and science.

It is probable that the connection between the Neth-

* The crusaders introduced silk and sugar into Europe. They also introduced the windmill, which, invented in Asia Minor and transported to the Netherlands, was to prove of untold value in the development of that country. See Gibbon, vi. 193.

erlands and Italy was never broken; if it was, the re-establishment occurred at a very early day. We find that the guilds to manufacture salt and for the purpose of bringing under cultivation marshy grounds ascend to the Roman epoch.* From the seventh and ninth centuries Bruges, Antwerp, and Ghent are "ports" or privileged markets. They fit out cruisers for the whale fishery; they serve as the entrepôts for the North and the South.† The first crusade owed its success in a great degree to the valor and prudence of Godfrey de Bouillon, a Flemish knight, who, it is said, took the field with ten thousand horsemen and eighty thousand infantry. In 1272 there were so many Genoese in Flanders that Charles of Anjou asks to have them banished; but public opinion is too strong, and their expulsion is found to be impracticable. Some twenty years later Philip the Fair of France compels Guy de Dampierre to restore the property which he had taken from the Lombard merchants settled in Flanders.‡ In the next century we find a large number of Italians from Lombardy living in Middelburg, where they establish a banking-house, soon adding commerce in gold and jewels. Their goods were displayed in a special building called the "House of the Lombards." Similar houses existed in other cities.§ Ludovico Guicciardini, writing in 1563, says that even in Zeeland, though few persons spoke French or Spanish, there were many who spoke Italian.‖ In the

* Moke's "Mœurs et Usages des Belges," quoted by Taine.

† Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," p. 84.

‡ Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. ii.

§ Havard's "Heart of Holland," chap. xiii. London also had its Lombard Street.

‖ This writer, who is the leading authority upon the condition of

sixteenth century, as the result of geographical exploration, attention was called to botany, and public botanical gardens were established. Their order is significant as showing the influence of Italy: Pisa, 1543; Padua, 1545; Florence, 1556; Rome and Bologna, 1568; Leyden, 1577; Leipsic, 1580; Montpellier, 1597; Paris, 1626; and Oxford, 1680.* Thus Holland stands but thirty-four years behind the first of the Italian cities.

These illustrations are only suggestive of the relations between the countries, of which we shall see much more hereafter. To trace the full connection would involve a large chapter of the history of the Middle Ages.

Keeping now in mind the character of the country, its early occupants, and their connection with the civilization of Italy, the course of their development can be readily understood.

Beginning with the earliest form of industry, what would be the natural feeling of such a race towards the soil, when we remember that it was their own production? One of the commonest lessons of experience is that men hold in light esteem the gifts of nature which come to them without an effort. The mother's favorite is not the stalwart, healthy child who needs no care, but the weakling or the cripple. The Germans, and to some extent the Gauls, wandering through their Northern wilds, where land was to be had by taking, looked down on agriculture as unworthy of a freeman. The only noble prizes of life were those won by skill or courage,

---

the Netherlands in the sixteenth century, was a Florentine, a nephew of the famous Italian historian. He lived in the Netherlands for about forty years, and in 1563 published, at Antwerp, an extensive work descriptive of the manners, customs, institutions, and resources of the country.

* Whewell's "History of the Inductive Sciences," iii. 291.

such as the spoils of the chase or battle. But, settled amid the everlasting morasses of the Netherlands, where life was a constant struggle with the elements, these men found the conquests of peace no less difficult, and therefore no less honorable, than those of war. Thus with labor ennobled, the natural result followed. Curbing the ocean and overflowing rivers with their dikes, they came to love the soil, their own creation, and to till it with patient, almost tender care.

Hence, as farmers and gardeners, breeders of fine cattle and horses, they early took the place which they have ever since maintained. Even in the fourteenth century we find agriculture taught in the schools of Flanders, spade husbandry greatly affected, and Flemish gardeners and cultivators in much demand in all parts of Europe.* Flax and hemp were grown to a large extent; hops were cultivated for the brewers; the gardens supplied pease, beans, vetches, onions, garlic, and orache—a vegetable now superseded by spinach—and the orchards apples, pears, and cherries in abundance.†

England, until a comparatively recent time, knew nothing of these pursuits. When Catherine of Aragon wished for a salad, she was compelled to send for it across the Channel by a special messenger.‡ Furnishing the court with salads, the Low Countries, in time, gave to the English people hops for their beer, cabbages, carrots, beets, and other vegetables for their table, flower-seeds for their gardens, large cattle for

---

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld." Many Flemish farmers went over to England, to the alluvial plains of East Norfolk. As to the excellence of Flemish husbandry for over six centuries, see M'Culloch's Geographical Dictionary, article "Belgium."

† Hutton.

‡ Hume.

their fields, great Flemish mares for the carriages of the aristocracy, artificial grasses for the support of their stock through winter, and lessons in the cultivation of their soil, which quadrupled its products.*

Still, though pre-eminent in agriculture, this was but a minor industry among the Netherlanders. Fighting the water for a home, they early learned their power, and the humbled ocean became a servant as faithful and almost as potent as the fabled genius of the lamp. In little barks they explored the Northern seas, sailed up into the Baltic, crept around the coast of France and Spain into the Mediterranean, became the best sailors, built up the largest commerce, and early took rank as the foremost merchants of the world. In the tenth century, Bruges is a great commercial centre;† in the thirteenth, it is the first commercial city of Europe.‡

Why their commerce developed so rapidly is obvious when we consider the growth of their manufactures.

---

* Hume, chap. xxxiii., fixes the date of the introduction of vegetables into England as during the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII. Even then they made progress very slowly, being used mainly for medicinal purposes. Cabbages were first grown in England during the reign of Elizabeth. Southerden Burn, p. 257. See also Wade's "History of England Chronologically Arranged," i. 156. He says that asparagus, cauliflower, artichokes, etc., were introduced about 1602.

"Hops, reformation, bays, and beer
Came into England all in one year."

—Old English rhyme, quoted Southerden Burn, p. 205. See Rogers's "Story of Holland" as to instruction in agriculture.

† "The Hansa Towns," p. 163.

‡ Motley, i. 37. Seebohm's "Protestant Revolution," 17. The latter work, American edition, contains an interesting map, showing how all the routes of commerce by sea and land centred in the Netherlands.

Chief among these manufactures was that of woollen cloth, an industry so important to Northern nations that its introduction marks an epoch in their history, for before this period they had nothing but skins as material for warm clothing. This had its origin in Flanders, but at a period so early that historians cannot fix the date.*

With the cloth industry, or following in its train, grew up the manufacture of silk, linen, tapestry, and lace, which made Flanders the manufacturing as well as the commercial centre of the world. Exporting her fabrics in turn increased her commerce, and there were gathered in her busy marts the products of all climes: drugs and spices from the East; velvets and glass from Italy; wines from France; furs, metals, and wax from Russia, Norway, and Sweden. Nor was it only by the ocean that this early trade was carried on. Following the old Roman roads, the enterprising Netherlanders

---

* Hallam, writing of the commerce of Europe, says: "The northern portion was first animated by the woollen manufactures of Flanders. It is not easy to discover the early beginnings of this, or to account for its rapid advancement. The fertility of that province and its facilities of internal navigation were doubtless necessary causes; but there must have been some temporary encouragement from the personal character of its sovereigns or other accidental circumstances. Several testimonies to the flourishing condition of Flemish manufactures occur in the twelfth century, and some might be found perhaps earlier. A writer of the thirteenth century asserts that all the world was clothed from English wool wrought in Flanders. This, indeed, is an exaggerated vaunt; but the Flemish stuffs were probably sold wherever the sea or a navigable river permitted them to be carried."—Hallam's "Middle Ages," chap. ix., part 2. Robertson says that the manufacture of wool and flax seems to have been considerable in the Netherlands in the time of Charlemagne. Robertson's "Charles V." (Amer. ed. 1770), i. 69.

made their way through France, and down into Spain, meeting there the highly civilized and cultivated Moors, to whom they probably owed many of their improvements in agriculture and the arts. Sailing up the Rhine, they kept up close relations with the Germans, who, under the influence of Italy, were rapidly stepping to the front rank among civilized peoples. * With Italy itself, which divided with them the commerce of the world, their relations grew more and more intimate, for they were far enough apart to assist rather than to injure each other's trade, and hence their rivalry was deprived of bitterness.

What a scene as compared with the rest of Northern Europe, and especially with England, in which we have the greatest interest, must have been presented by the Low Countries during the fourteenth century! In 1370, there are thirty-two hundred woollen-factories at Malines and on its territory.† One of its merchants carries on an immense trade with Damascus and Alexandria. Another, of Valenciennes, being at Paris during a fair, buys up all the provisions exposed for sale in order to display his wealth. Ghent, in 1340, contains forty thousand weavers. In 1389, it has one hundred and eighty-nine thousand men bearing arms; the drapers alone furnish eighteen thousand in a revolt. In 1380, the goldsmiths of Bruges are numerous enough to form in war time an entire division of the army.‡ At a repast given by one

---

* See Janssen's "History of Germany," for an account of its condition before the Reformation. Also Lübke's "Hist. of Art," Am. ed. ii. 1, and Giordano Bruno as to its condition about 1590, before the Thirty Years' War sent it back to semi-barbarism.

† Little domestic concerns unlike our modern factories.

‡ Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," p. 86.

of the Counts of Flanders to the Flemish magistrates, the seats provided for the guests being unfurnished with cushions, they quietly folded up their sumptuous cloaks, richly embroidered and trimmed with fur, and placed them on the wooden benches. When leaving the table at the conclusion of the feast, a courtier called their attention to the fact that they were going without their cloaks. The burgomaster of Bruges replied: "We Flemings are not in the habit of carrying away the cushions after dinner." The queen of Philip the Fair, of France, on a visit to Bruges, exclaimed with astonishment, not unmixed with envy: "I thought myself the only queen here; but I see six hundred others, who appear more so than I." * Commines, the French chronicler, writing in the fifteenth century, says that the traveller, leaving France and crossing the frontiers of Flanders, compared himself to the Israelites when they had quitted the desert and entered the borders of the Promised Land.

Philip the Good kept up a court which surpassed every other in Europe for luxury and magnificence.† In 1444, he gave at Lille a grand pageant, the "Feast of the Pheasant," such as the modern world had never seen before. His son, Charles the Bold, married the sister of the King of England, and gave in her honor a pageant

---

* Grattan's "History of the Netherlands," p. 75, Carey & Lea, Phil., 1831.

† "His library consisted of the rarest manuscripts and the earliest specimens of printed books, splendidly bound and illuminated, the nucleus of a collection which, enriched by successive additions, is now one of the most important of the world." His collection of gems and plate was said to be the finest in existence. Kirk's "Charles the Bold," i. 88.

extending over many days, even more magnificent. The English visitors wrote home that it realized the fairy tales of King Arthur and his Round Table.* As Kirk well says, in his "Life of Charles the Bold," "the luxuries of life come before the comforts," a truth to be remembered when we come to view the Elizabethan age in England. Reading of her two or three thousand gowns, the revels which attended her royal progresses, the costly garments of the courtiers, the tapestry, the gold and silver plate to be found in some few mansions, we should make a great mistake if we regarded these exhibitions as proofs of an advanced civilization or of national comfort. In all such matters of luxury and display, England of the sixteenth or seventeenth century had nothing to compare with the Netherlands a hundred or even two hundred years before. After luxury, come comfort, intelligence, morality, and learning, which develop under very different conditions.

In the course of time even Italy was outstripped in the commercial race. The conquest of Egypt by the Turks,† and the discovery of a water passage to the Indies, broke up the overland trade with the East, and destroyed the Italian and German cities which had flourished on it. Of the profits derived from the substituted ocean traffic with the Indies, and the new commerce with America—the commerce which helped so largely to give Spain her transitory wealth and greatness—the Low Countries, acting as distributors, obtained more than their full share. Passing from the dominion of the House of Burgundy to that of the House of Austria,

---

* See as to feasts and pageants, one witnessed by Albert Dürer in 1520, described in Taine's "Art in the Netherlands."

† 1512, 1515, and 1520.

which also numbered Spain among its vast possessions, proved to them in the end an event fraught with momentous evil. Still for a time, and from a mere material point of view, it was an evil not unmixed with good. The Netherlanders were better sailors and keener merchants than the Spaniards, and, being under the same rulers, gained substantial advantages from the close connection. The new commerce of Portugal also filled their coffers; so that while Italy and Germany were impoverished, they became wealthier and more prosperous than ever, having, by the middle of the sixteenth century, absorbed most of the carrying trade of the world.

As I have already pointed out, the English, down to the time of Elizabeth and until educated by their neighbors, knew very little even of agriculture except in its rudest forms. They were mainly engaged in raising sheep, and their wool, with that from Spain and Scotland, went to the great market of the Netherlands.* The wool-sack of the Lord Chancellor of England, says a modern writer, symbolizes the period in which sheep-raising was the only industry of the people. When Philip the Good founded at Bruges his new order of chivalry, he chose as an emblem a golden fleece. The artisans of the Netherlands had woven the wool into gold.†

With wealth pouring in from all quarters, art naturally followed in the wake of commerce. Architecture was first developed, and nowhere was its cultivation

---

* Green's "History of the English People," vol. i. book iii. chap. iv.

† Conway's "Early Flemish Artists," p. 57. About 1380, the English, taught by Netherland emigrants, first began to make coarse woollen cloth. Southerden Burn's "Protestant Refugees in England," p. 4.

more general than in the Netherlands. Our knowledge of the Middle Ages is still so imperfect that little can be said with certainty about the men who designed and the workmen who constructed the superb cathedrals, which, scattered over Northwestern Europe, protest against our supercilious estimate of modern progress, standing, like the ruins on the Nile, mute but unimpeachable witnesses to a former civilization. It is believed that these structures owe their origin to a great secret masonic brotherhood, league, or guild, bound probably by religious vows, with headquarters in France and Germany, and branches in other parts of Europe. To a branch of this league are attributed the splendid and elaborately finished buildings with which the Netherlands were adorned between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.* Chief among these buildings were the cathedrals of Flanders and Brabant, some of which were brilliant masterpieces.

But the Church did not here, as in most other lands, absorb all the skill and genius of the builders, and in this fact we see at once how this people stand apart from their contemporaries in Northern Europe. Elsewhere, in the North at least, architectural art was only a handmaid of religion, all decoration, under the guidance of the priesthood, being lavished on ecclesiastical structures, because the Church held almost all the knowledge and controlled a large share of the wealth. Here, however, another power was coming to the front. The merchants and manufacturers were generous enough

* Motley's "Dutch Republic," i. 86, 551; "The Arts in the Middle Ages," La Croix, p. 377, etc. The first architecture from Germany was probably Romanesque. The true Gothic came from the Normans in France.

towards the Church, but they soon passed beyond the stage where they thought it entitled to all their treasures. Hence, even in these early days, secular architecture, one of the best measures of the wealth and refinement of a nation, had attained to great importance, covering the land with town-halls and other public buildings, which are still the delight and wonder of the artist.*

England, at an early period, had her cathedrals built mainly under foreign influences; but we look there in vain for any sign of devotion to art in any other public structures, until we come to comparatively modern days. When now we descend to the dwellings of the people, the contrast is no less marked. At a time when the private houses in England were of the most primitive character, differing, as to the middle classes, but little from those described by Tacitus in his "Germania" fifteen centuries before, the cities of the Netherlands were studded over with private palaces of marble.† Even in the thirteenth century the principal Flemish towns contained Turkish baths, their streets were paved and kept in good order, while the houses of the wealthy

---

* "Burgher opulence and energy are grandly and vigorously expressed in the secular buildings of these towns. For example, we have the 'Hall of the Cloth-makers,' now the Town Hall of Ypres, 1200–1364; Town Hall at Bruges, begun 1284; Council House at Bruges, 1377; Council House at Brussels, 1401–55; the still more magnificent Town Hall at Louvain, belonging to the second half of the fifteenth century; and that at Oudenarde, built in 1527–30."—Lübke's "History of Art," ii. 24–27.

† In what is known in history as the "Spanish Fury," in 1576, the Spaniards destroyed in Antwerp alone "at least five hundred palaces, mostly of marble and hammered stone."—Motley's "Dutch Republic," iii. 115.

burghers were built of stone and supplied with chimneys.*

Nor was the contrast with the English dwellings confined to their external appearance alone. Entering those of the Netherlanders, one would have seen them filled with paintings, tapestry, linen, brass, and costly furniture, such as could be found in no other quarter of the globe. Albert Dürer visited the country in 1520. It seems by his "Journal" that although he had lived in Italy, he was lost in wonder and delight at the magnificent buildings, the costly furniture, the artistic ornaments, the rich clothing, and the general display of wealth and splendor which he found in the Low Countries.†

If architecture was at first the result of a German and then of a Norman or French impulse, its junior, painting, was probably due to the influence of Italy, although exerted through the medium of the German cities on the Rhine. Here, however, the pupil more than

---

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld."

† The picture of John Arnolfini and his wife, one of the treasures in the National Gallery at London, painted by Jan Van Eyck, who was born about 1380, shows a Flemish interior which is very suggestive. The subjects are a well-to-do merchant and his wife standing in their bedroom holding hands. The furniture consists of a handsome bedstead, with an upright carved chair by the side, and a carved bench along the wall. Right opposite the spectator is a convex mirror set in a frame adorned with little medallion paintings. In the centre of the room hangs a fine bronze chandelier, and beyond is a glazed window with an orange on the sill. The painting is signed "Jan Van Eyck was here," and no certificate could be stronger as to the veracity of its details. See Conway's "Early Flemish Artists," p. 149. In a later chapter we shall see how English houses were constructed and furnished, even in the days of Elizabeth.

repaid the master. The earliest dawn of the art in modern Europe, as shown in fresco and distemper, is found on the southern side of the Alps; but modern painting in oil, the art which glows on the canvas of a Raphael, a Titian, or a Rembrandt, had its origin in the Netherlands. Most authorities, from the days of Vasari, have credited the discovery of oil-painting to the brothers Van Eyck, who painted at The Hague, Ghent, and Bruges, during the latter part of the fourteenth and the early part of the fifteenth century. This, perhaps, is not exactly correct, for oil was used in this country long before their era. Nor were they the first artists of the Netherlands in point of time. For centuries the churches had been filled with paintings which seem to have possessed considerable merit.* The moist climate, however, has worked destruction to most of the wall productions, on which the reputation of the early artists was based, so that we can judge of them only from contemporaneous reports.†

But there was something besides the climate. The churches of Italy, with their wide walls and broad roof spaces, afforded scope for fresco decoration which was wanting in the structures of a Gothic type, with their arches, pillars, and groined roofs. Hence the Netherland paintings were of a different class, being smaller and mostly executed on wooden panels. The groundwork of the panel was prepared with a thin coating of fine plaster, and upon this coating the colors were laid,

---

* In 1143, a fire consumed the principal churches in Utrecht and destroyed "a number of magnificent paintings." — Davies's "Holland," i. 41.

† We have a few excellent Flemish wall paintings, and some meritorious panel pictures of the fourteenth century. Conway, p. 126.

being mixed with the white of an egg or the juice of unripe figs. Oil was employed, but its use was attended with great disadvantages. It was difficult to lay the colors finely with it, and they took a long time to dry. For this reason it was never used in the finished part of the work, but only for large masses of drapery and the like. The great objection to this process lay in the fact, not then discovered to its full extent, however, that in time the whole mass flaked off, leaving nothing but the bare surface of the panel. To the Van Eyck brothers is due the credit of remedying this defect. They mixed some substance, probably resin, with boiled oil, and found that they now had a medium which dried without exposure to the sun, and with which the finest and most delicate work could be accomplished. Using this substance, the plaster on the panel was interpenetrated with the varnish, and the whole wrought so finely together that at last the surface became like enamel, and it is generally next to impossible to detect the traces of the brush.* The discovery of the Van Eycks not only gave paintings a finer character, but made them substantially indestructible by time. It was carried to Italy by the artists from that country, who in great numbers were then studying in the Netherlands, and a century later was brought to completion in the studios of Venice under the hands of Titian and his fellows.

The Van Eyck brothers are, however, entitled to much greater honor than that of discovering a new process in art. They were the crowning figures in a school which had been in existence for two or three centuries at least, and they were the greatest painters of the age.† Together

---

* Conway's "Early Flemish Artists," pp. 116–119.

† "Their era," says Lübke, "is so glorious, so untrammelled and

they painted the world-renowned picture of the "Adoration of the Lamb," at St. Bavon's Church, in Ghent. The finest part of this grand work is attributed to the elder brother, Hubert, who was born in 1366; but the remainder, conceded to the younger, is also of extraordinary merit. Looking at this picture, and at the later paintings of the younger brother, we feel that we have come into a new world of art. Here are no longer mere personified qualities or abstractions, as among the Italians, but real human beings, men painted as they looked on earth. Hence we have in Jan Van Eyck the originator of the modern school of portrait-painters, in which Flanders and Holland were to lead the world. But there is something more about these pictures. Viewing the paintings which precede this era, we find as a background for the figures nothing but a plain surface or a mass of gilt. In the "Adoration of the Lamb," we see for the first time a fine landscape as a background.* This innovation also marks an epoch. Thenceforth the painters of the Low Countries abjured their gilt; the background becomes from year to year more important, until Joachim Patinier, born in 1490, makes it the prominent feature of his pictures, and becomes the founder of the modern Northern school of landscape painting.†

Thus we find that painting follows, among this people, the same course as its elder sister, architecture. In France it was said that only what was executed for the Church or king was art.‡ This was true of most coun-

---

magnificent, that the corresponding period in Italy scarcely bears comparison with it."—"History of Art," ii. 420–429. Conway's "Early Flemish Artists;" Eastlake's "History of Oil-Painting;" Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," etc.

* Conway, p. 271.

† Lübke, ii. 452.

‡ Grimm's "Life of Michael Angelo," ii. 53.

tries. It, however, ceased to be true in the Netherlands at an early date. We have seen how it was with architecture. Even in the churches, it has been objected that the pure Gothic design was somewhat sacrificed to the convenience of the worshippers. These people believed that churches were designed for man, and they therefore made them comfortable for the masses; they believed that art was for every-day use, and so applied it to their town-halls and dwellings, and made it the companion of the fireside. It is this homelike quality which distinguishes the great pictures of the Dutch and Flemish schools. In other lands the artists revelled in visions of imaginary loveliness, choosing as subjects scenes in which youth and beauty usually play the leading parts. The Netherlanders loved above all things verity, and transferred to the canvas what they saw around them. They valued character and intellect above mere beauty of form, and so preferred as subjects for their portraits faces which tell a story. As a rule, these faces are not handsome, but they belong to men who look as if they had lived and had accomplished something in the world.*

For a time, after the death of the Van Eycks and their immediate successors, Italian art took the lead, and unfortunately many of the Netherland painters wasted their lives in the vain attempt to work against their nature by an imitation of this foreign school. Still, there flourished in the Low Countries, during the whole of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a great number

---

* "Plato was quite right in making the Beautiful the splendor of the True, and this would be now the best definition of Flemish and Dutch painting."—Gambetta, in an unpublished letter from Brussels, 1873. London *Times*, July 8th, 1889.

of artists whose works would take high rank but for the marvellous productions of Italy during the same period. At last came the mighty struggle with Spain, which gave independence to the seven northern provinces. Great as were the political and religious consequences of this struggle, no less marked were its results on art. The people learned their strength, became entirely self-reliant, gained intellectual as well as political independence, developed, perfected, and enlarged the schools founded by the Van Eycks two centuries before, put away forever saints and Madonnas, and astounded as they delighted the world with portraits, landscapes, marine views, pictures of flowers, fruit, cattle, sheep, horses, interiors of all descriptions—in fact, representations of everything in nature or in life that could instruct, elevate, arouse, or cheer mankind. Such a period of exaltation comes but rarely to a nation. It came to England after the destruction of the Spanish Armada, and gave to the world the literature which has made the Elizabethan age so famous. There it culminated in poetry, for the Englishmen of that day were poetical and imaginative. In the Netherlands it culminated in painting, because the people were artistic.

How the artistic element permeated all classes of society is shown by the beauty of their products in every department of the mechanical arts. Little has come down to us of the old Flemish jewelry, but it is spoken of as perhaps the finest goldsmith's work of which we have a record.* In the manufacture of fine furniture they were unexcelled, and their laces, silks, brocades, carpets, and rugs had a world-wide reputation. First among all these manufactured products stood the tapes-

* Conway, p. 85.

tries woven on the looms of Flanders. These have never been equalled for beauty or for finished workmanship. Numbers of them still survive, some with tints almost as fresh as when they were woven four or five centuries ago. Nothing could bear higher witness not only to the technical perfection, but to the artistic spirit as well, which in this case ennobled manufactures.*

The story of the development of art in the Netherlands is an interesting one, as bearing on the progress of society and the expansion of the idea that there was a community outside the priesthood and nobility. Architecture first becomes secularized; next painting steps down from the clouds and sits by the hearthstone of the burgher; then the artist displays his skill on the furniture, the ornaments, and the dress of these merchants and manufacturers. Finally comes the step which leads off into an undiscovered and untried ocean.

The common people, those who cannot afford to pay for oil-paintings, want pictures for their houses. The demand creates the supply. The ingenious Netherlanders discover that from blocks they can reproduce on paper pictures in black and white, and wood-engraving is invented.† From the Low Countries the invention

* Lübke, ii. 452. Raphael's celebrated cartoons for the Sistine Chapel were sent to Arras to be woven.

† According to La Croix, "The Arts in the Middle Ages," p. 488, wood-engraving originated in Holland, during the latter part of the fourteenth century. One of the earliest specimens now extant exists at Brussels, and is claimed to have been executed at Malines in 1418. Some authorities, however, assert that this is antedated, and that an engraving done in Suabia in 1423 is the first well-authenticated specimen now in existence. Linton's "Masters of Wood-Engravings."

rapidly spreads through Europe, meeting with favor especially in Germany, where the population had in some sections many of the same characteristics.*

Following wood-engraving, and as its natural supplement, came the printing of books from blocks. This originated from the desire of popularizing knowledge as engraving was popularizing art. Some of the early specimens are rude enough, but in others the work is exquisite of finish. The letters were cut on a single block of wood, and then this block was used to print from, in the same manner as the stereotype plate of modern times. The next step was to substitute movable type for the solid piece of wood, and we have the printing-press, which has revolutionized the world. Germany, on the present evidence, will never concede the honor of this invention to a Hollander, but its germ lay in the block books to which Holland lays unquestioned claim. It was, in truth, but following to its legitimate conclusions the lessons of the architects who built the exquisite town-halls, the artists who painted portraits and landscapes, and the engravers who reproduced pictures from their blocks — that beauty and truth are for the masses, and not alone for a chosen few.

In addition to painting, there was another department

---

* How wide-spread was the love of art in the Netherlands is shown by the fact that when Albert Dürer visits the country in the sixteenth century he pays his expenses in part by selling his engravings, the small ones being retailed at prices which brought them within the means of the humblest workman. See his "Journal." It is also interesting to notice, in this connection, that while Rembrandt at a later day received large prices for his paintings, he also made money from his etchings, which he carried to great perfection.

of art in which the Netherlanders stood supreme. As musicians they, for nearly two hundred years, had no rival. Other people cultivate music; to them it seems an instinct.* What is known as the Netherland School is divided into four epochs. It begins with William Dufay, of Hainault, who was a tenor singer in the Sistine Chapel from 1380 to 1432, and whose masses are still preserved at Rome. The next great master was John Okeghem, of East Flanders. He began to be celebrated about 1470, and has been called the "patriarch of music," being the inventor of the canon, and in general of artificial counterpoint. The school reached its zenith in the fourth epoch with Adrian Willaert, who was born at Bruges in 1490 and died in 1562. During this period, covering nearly two centuries, the Netherlands furnished all the courts of Europe not only with singers, but with composers and performers of instrumental music. They founded in Naples the first musical conservatory of the world, and another in Venice at about the same time. It was also to their influence and example that the renowned school of Rome owed its existence.† With the Reformation, all this came to a speedy end. The higher class of music was, until the days of the modern opera, reserved almost entirely for religious purposes. It was not easy to secularize it, and when, after many years, the time came for doing so, the people of the Low Countries had lost their former supremacy. Still, they have never lost their love for music. To-day, the great musical endowment of an ability to sing in parts is encountered even among the populace: the coal-

* See Taine's "Art in the Netherlands."

† Ritter's "History of Music," pp. 75, 87, 108; "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Music."

miners organize choral societies; the laborers in Antwerp and Brussels, and the ship-calkers and sailors of Amsterdam, sing in chorus and in true time while at work, and in the street on returning home at night.*

Here we may close this chapter, and with it our general view of the material and artistic side of the Netherland prosperity and progress. The result is a striking one, in view of the little attention which, until a recent date, has been paid to this people by the historians of other nations. They took no great part in wars; since the dissolution of the Batavian Legion they had neither made nor unmade emperors; but before the middle of the sixteenth century they had conquered almost all the fields of industry and art. When the people of England were just beginning their wonderful career of modern progress, these men across the Channel stood foremost of the world in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, engraving, and music, while they had only parted temporarily with the crown of painting, which, adding that of learning, they were to resume after Holland had won her independence.

---

* Taine's "Art in the Netherlands," p. 58.

CHAPTER II

THE NETHERLANDS BEFORE THE WAR WITH SPAIN

THE GUILDS, THE TOWNS, THE STATE, EDUCATION, RELIGION, AND MORALS

In the preceding chapter I have attempted a brief sketch of the rapid advance made by the Netherlanders in the industrial pursuits and in the arts, down to the middle of the sixteenth century. The important question now arises, What was the effect of this material prosperity and devotion to art on the love of liberty and the religious spirit which we should look for in this people, as an inheritance from their Germanic ancestors?

This question is of interest from many points of view. Thoughtful men in all ages have been more or less inclined to accept their civilization under protest. So much is said of its enervating influence, and such stress is laid upon the virtues of the early heroes who lodged in huts and devoured raw flesh for food, that men have sometimes asked, is it not better that we should return to a state of nature if we wish to keep bright the flame of liberty? In its religious aspect the subject is still more important. Many of the English Puritans were as intolerant as any of their opponents, looked down on art, suspected, if they did not despise, refinement of manners, and seemed bent on weeding joy and beauty out of life, as if their seeds had been implanted by the arch-enemy of man. These men, in many respects such

unworthy professors of a gospel of love, are sometimes held up as examples of earnestness in religion, the theory that they were superior in this respect to other people of their time, and that their descendants have degenerated from their early virtues, underlying much of English and American history as written in some quarters.

The effect of this teaching must be pernicious in its tendency, unless the proper corrective be applied. The men and women of the present generation are coming to use the world in which they live, and to enjoy its beauty and its gladness. The young, often more earnestly thoughtful than their elders, accept the pleasures of life, but, with the grim visages of their vaunted ancestors before them, are inclined at times to feel that joy is somehow sinful, and must be paid for in the end. Looking only at the history of England, seeing the excesses against which Puritanism was there a protest, dwelling on the virtues of our ancestors and not sharply enough distinguishing their faults, all this is natural enough. It seems, indeed, as if the typical English Puritan, as described by some writers, with his long, sad face, suspicion of joy and beauty, narrowness of mind, and intolerance of the beliefs of others, was the embodiment of earnestness itself, and that his descendants, so far as they differ from him, are moving down to a lower plane.* A broader view of history, however, will dispel this delusion, and nowhere can a better corrective be found than in the story of the Netherlands.

Here were a people with largely the same blood as the

---

* See Carlyle's "Cromwell," and other writings of the same school. Carlyle, it may be noticed, habitually speaks of the Hollanders as "low-minded Dutchmen," because they did not sympathize with all the excesses of the English Puritans.

English, and with the same inherited traits of character, but educated under very different conditions. When now we consider their earnestness for civil and religious liberty, the record of the two nations can scarcely be compared. Some of the English Puritans fled across the Atlantic from a slight religious persecution, and founded a New England. Others remained at home, fought their king in a few pitched battles, and established a commonwealth, which in eleven years went to pieces, simply because the people were unfitted for self-government. The Puritans of Holland battled for their liberties during four fifths of a century, facing not alone the bravest and best-trained soldiers of the age, but flames, the gibbet, flood, siege, pestilence, and famine. Every atrocity that religious fanaticism could invent, every horror that ever followed in the train of war, swept over and desolated their land. To speak in the same breath of the hardships or sufferings of the English Puritan, as if they served to explain his unlovely traits of character, seems almost puerile.

Out from this war of eighty years' duration emerged a republic, for two centuries the greatest in the world—a republic which was the instructor of the world in art, and whose corner-stone was religious toleration for all mankind. Its people had endured everything for civil liberty and for the Protestant religion; but they wore no long, sad faces, nor did they, either at home or in America, put men to death for differing from them in religion. In view of their story, the pernicious theory that earnestness in religion or devotion to the principles of self-government makes men joyless, haters of art, or persecutors of their fellows should be consigned to the abysmal darkness whence it came. Such a doctrine is one of the most striking illustrations of the cant of history.

The English Puritans, both at home and in America, exhibited great qualities, for which they should receive all honor; but they also exhibited defects, so glaring as, in the minds of many persons, almost to obscure their virtues. The defects, however, as we shall see hereafter, sprang from the condition of English society under which its Puritanism was developed. To charge them to the age, as if all the world were in the same condition, is an offence against historic truth; but that offence is light compared with the crime of charging them to religion or to the love of republican institutions.

Let us now glance at the form of government established in the Netherlands prior to the great revolt from Spain, then at the condition of the people in relation to education, religion, and morals. This is necessary to an understanding of the nature and results of that wonderful struggle, and a comprehension of the mode in which the Dutch Puritans became the instructors of their English brethren.

In 1555, the Emperor Charles V., broken by the gout and wearied of the cares of state, retired to private life. Before entering the monastery in which he was to pass the remainder of his days, he turned over to his son and heir almost all the vast possessions which, wielded by his sturdy arm and directed by his genius, had made him the foremost monarch of the age. His successor, Philip II. of Spain, became by this cession king of all the Spanish kingdoms and of both the Sicilies—"Absolute Dominator," according to the high-flown language of the day, in Asia, Africa, and America—Duke of Milan and of both the Burgundies, and hereditary sovereign of the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands. The last was the richest and fairest jewel in his crown. Of the five millions poured annually into the royal treasury, two came

from these provinces, while only half a million came from Spain, and a like sum from Mexico and Peru.*

The seventeen provinces at this time composing the Netherlands were so many separate states. Each had an hereditary ruler, called a duke, marquis, count, or baron—titles which centuries before had been held by different persons. Now one person held them all, but still each state maintained its individuality and had its own government, as the American colonies had theirs before the Revolution. As the King of England appointed governors for the American colonies, so in the Netherlands the superior lord, now Philip of Spain, appointed governors, or stadtholders, to represent his sovereignty in the various provinces, and a regent to control the whole. Within the provinces, again, were the cities and towns, each of which had its separate charter, some of them so liberal as to make them virtual republics.† The population of all the provinces was estimated at three millions.‡ Three millions of people, according to Motley, the most industrious, the most prosperous, perhaps the most intelligent, under the sun.§

The southern states, which in the end remained attached to Spain, were at this time the more populous and wealthy. Those in the north, however, were rap-

---

* Motley, i. 112.

† In the seventeen provinces were 208 walled cities, 150 chartered towns, and 6300 villages. Motley, i. 91.

‡ About one fourth as large as at present. All estimates of population in the days before a regular census was taken are, however, vague and only approximate. That of England at this time is fixed by Green at from five to six millions, while Macaulay places it no higher a century later. Prof. Thorold Rogers, probably the best authority, estimates the population of England in the reign of Elizabeth at only two millions and a half. *Time*, March, 1890.

§ Motley, i. 90.

idly stepping to the front, and the long war which they were about to wage with Spain established their pre-eminence in all departments. Holland, in particular, had founded an industry of surpassing value. In 1414, a humble fisherman, Jacob Beukelszoon, of Biervliet, in Zeeland, by one of the practical inventions of which his people were to give so many to the world, had opened up in the sea a mine of wealth richer than all the mines of Mexico or Peru. It was simply a novel and easy method, still in use, of drying and packing fish. Two years later the first large herring seine was manufactured.* Thenceforth the fisheries of Holland, at a time when almost all the world abstained from meat in Lent and on every Wednesday and Friday, became of vast importance. Not only did they bring into the country an endless stream of gold, but they nurtured the brave and skilful seamen who aided so much in building up the great republic.† Half a century after this invention, Philip of Burgundy, writing to the pope, said that "Holland and Zeeland were inhabited by a brave and warlike people, who have never been conquered by their neighbors, and who prosecuted their commerce on every sea." ‡

---

* Davies's "Holland," i. 195. Authorities differ as to this claim of Beukelszoon, there being no proof in the records that he was the inventor of the process, which, however, originated in Biervliet about his time. Rogers's "Story of Holland," p. 27. Of more importance is the statement that the great impulse to the fisheries of Holland was due to the fact that about 1425 the herring first began to spawn in the German Ocean. "The Hansa Towns," by Helen Zimmern, p. 49.

† It should be mentioned to the honor of Charles V. that, being in 1550 at Biervliet, where Beukelszoon was buried, he visited the grave and ordered a magnificent monument to be erected to the memory of the man who had rendered so signal a service to his country. *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1830, p. 419.

‡ "La Richesse de la Holland," i. 26.

Such was the general condition of the Netherlands when by the abdication of Charles V. they passed to his successor. That successor never understood the people committed to his rule, knew nothing of their spirit, and could not comprehend why they so insisted on their civil and religious rights. Throughout the rest of Europe, the feudal tyranny having passed away, the monarchs were absorbing all the power. Such was the case in neighboring France, in Spain, where Philip was born and lived, and in England, where he found a wife. Why should he not govern these provinces in the same manner as the other parts of his dominions? That he could not, he discovered before his death. To understand why he could not, we must look at the institutions of the country with some care.

There was a time in the early history of the Netherlands when liberty was in danger. The ancient Germanic freedom was protected chiefly by poverty and isolation; but when men began to cultivate the land, trade with one another, and lay up wealth, these warders went off guard. Had this people then been devoted to agriculture alone, the results would probably have been as disastrous as in other parts of Europe. But here commerce and manufactures came to the rescue, and built up the walled towns which were for ages the citadels of freedom. The growth of these towns, and the municipal institutions there developed, form the principal feature of Netherland history. In most other countries the towns were mere aggregations of individuals, with privileges, customs, and chartered rights more or less defined, but subject to the general government, and comparatively early falling under national control. Here, on the other hand, when once established, they grew steadily in power and independence, until in the end they

became almost little republics, levying their own taxes, electing their own magistrates, and making their own laws.

It is not necessary for our purpose, nor would it be an easy task, to trace the origin of these towns and show the methods of their growth. Within the present century considerable attention has been paid to these subjects, but much yet remains to be accomplished. All that has been discovered, however, tends more and more to prove the influence of Rome, in this as in other matters, upon the institutions of the Netherlands.*

The city of Bruges is perhaps typical of the later towns of the Netherlands, and its origin suggestive of

---

* Savigny, in his "History of Roman Law in the Middle Ages," and Raynouard, in his "Histoire de Droit Municipal," have traced the continuance of municipal institutions in some ten French cities from the age of the Roman Empire to the twelfth century, when the formal charters of communities first appear. Hallam, speaking of the French cities of the eleventh century, says: "We must here distinguish the cities of Flanders and Holland, which obtained their independence much earlier; in fact, their self-government goes back beyond any assignable date. They appear to have sprung from a distinct source, but still from the great reservoir of Roman institutions. The cities on the Rhine retained more of their ancient organization than we find in Northern France. The Roman language, says Thierry, had here perished, the institutions survived. At Cologne we find, from age to age, a corporation of citizens exactly resembling the curia, and whose members set up hereditary pretensions to a Roman descent; we find there a particular tribunal for the *cessio bonorum*, a part of Roman law unknown to the old jurisprudence of Germany, as to that of the feudal system. In the twelfth century the free constitution of Cologne passed for ancient. From Cologne and Treves municipal rights spread to the Rhenish cities of less remote origin, and reached the great communities of Flanders and Brabant."—Hallam's "Middle Ages," vol. i. chap. ii. note 18, ed. 1878.

the mode in which such communities arose. Charlemagne planted several thousand Saxon colonists on the west coast of Flanders, partly to repel the incursions of the Northmen, and partly to serve as hostages for the orderly conduct of their kinsmen beyond the eastern borders of his empire. He also appointed a *forestier*, whose duty it was to enforce obedience to the laws, collect imposts, and preserve the royal forests. This arrangement was of brief duration. In the reign of Charles the Bald, about 860, a rude Flemish chieftain, Baldwin of the Iron Arm, ran away with the king's daughter, Judith, but after many vicissitudes was taken into favor. Flanders was erected into a county to be held as a fief of France, and conferred on the bold Baldwin, with the title of Markgraf, or Warden of the Marches. He then built a castle, commanding a bridge over the little river Reye, with a chapel to receive certain relics of St. Donatus, sent to him by the Archbishop of Rheims. Outside the walls he erected houses for the reception of merchants and itinerant traders, and laid out a place of meeting for freemen. Thus a small town arose under the castle walls, which took the name of Brugge, from the bridge to which it primarily owed its existence. This toll-house on the river, for such it really was, developed into the city of Bruges, which in the tenth century had a large commerce, and in the thirteenth was the commercial capital of Europe.*

Bruges was, however, a modern town. It grew up on a trade already established, for the country had merchants, and commerce from which toll could be collected. Its advantages were those of situation; these, and not its antiquity, gave it prominence. Other cities

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. i.

in the interior are older, and it is through them that the ideas of Rome were handed down, which, mingled with the traditions of the German race, built up the little republics that studded the whole surface of the land.

The distinguishing feature of all these municipalities, that which more than any other gave them strength, was the system by which the citizens were divided into guilds. The birthplace of this institution is disputed; one party claiming that it is of Germanic origin, the other that it was derived from Rome. Perhaps both are right in part. The early Germans were accustomed to form associations for mutual protection against accidents by fire or water and similar misadventures. These unions were called Minne, or Friendships. Hence the word Minnesingers of later days. After a time the name of Minne passed into that of Ghilde, meaning a feast at the common expense. Each ghilde was placed under the patronage of some departed hero or demi-god, and was managed by officers elected by the members, social equality lying at its foundation.* With the introduction of Christianity the demi-god was replaced by a saint, but the clergy frowned on the associations, which led to much intemperance. Such was the origin of the guilds of the Middle Ages, according to some authorities, and for those of a social and charitable nature we need look no further. But the guilds which were of chief importance, those which characterized the cities of the Netherlands, were associations among members of the same trade for industrial purposes, and these seem rather to have come from Rome.

The Romans exercised the right of association from a

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. i.

very early time, and it is asserted that Numa encouraged the formation of craft-guilds, of which Plutarch enumerates nine. Exercised voluntarily under the republic, the right became somewhat curtailed under the empire, and the collegia, as they were called, were limited by imperial decree.* Yet they became very numerous, not only in Rome, but throughout the rest of the empire, especially in the East, in Italy, and in Gaul. Many of these associations were organized for good-fellowship, some for religious purposes, others to provide for burial, but the most important were those formed for trade and manufactures. Thus we find at Naples in the sixth century a soapmakers' guild, and in the Netherlands at the same period one for making salt. In Rome, the collegia were mostly confined to the poorer classes, but in the provinces they numbered among their members not only wealthy tradesmen, but also nobles. All chose their own officers, made their own laws, and paid contributions to a common fund.†

The Germanic guilds and the Roman collegia were thus much alike; and in one or the other, or in both combined, we see the original of many of the institutions of the Middle Ages and of later times. Out of the Germanic guilds, formed for mutual protection, insurance, and social purposes, grew the Anglo-Saxon hundreds, where each member was responsible for the actions of all the others. From the same source came the social guilds which before the Reformation were so numerous in England, there being over nine hundred in the county of

---

* Trajan was much opposed to them. See "Letters of the Younger Pliny," x. 34.

† For a short account of the Roman guilds, see "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Guild," and authorities cited.

Norfolk alone. In the Netherlands these old Germanic associations seem gradually to have assumed the government of the towns. However, when this came about, they had lost their ancient name, and were no longer called guilds, but communes, embracing all who were entitled to gather together in the public place when the town bell rang out the summons. Thenceforth, the name guild was limited to the trade or manufacturing associations, which seem to have had more of a Roman origin.

On being admitted a member of his craft-guild, each workman took an oath to uphold divine worship, and to serve his count loyally and with all his might. For misconduct he was liable to punishment, while he was entitled to a pension after a certain term of honorable service. Within the guild, there reigned the most perfect equality, each member being part of a machine. Wages and prices were regulated by the deacon or head man. Hours of labor were precisely defined, so that no employer could steal a march on a competitor. Among the weavers, all the wool was bought by the guild and distributed on terms of strict impartiality. In each workshop the number of looms was limited, and no employer was allowed to lure away the workmen of another. A master workman, as a rule, could not employ more than three journeymen at a time. A citizen of another town had great difficulty in getting into a craft-guild, unless it could be shown that extra hands were really needed. The competition aimed at was that of trade against trade, town against town, province against province, the Low Countries against the world, and not that of individual against his fellow. With all these restrictions upon liberty of action, the most extreme care was used to secure efficiency among the members of each guild.

A long and arduous apprenticeship was required before a man could become a workman. Every mistake was punished with a fine, and any glaring violation of morality or infringement of the law by expulsion from the order.

Each of these trades-companies had its own chapel, and generally its own hospital, as well as its *herberg*, or house of call, in which were preserved its charters and other public documents. The members made their own internal laws, and discussed collectively all matters relating to their common interests. Each association was presided over by a deacon, or *deken*, elected by the members, but rarely from among their ranks. Each had its own tribunal, from whose decision there was no appeal. Thus the guilds formed little republics within the communes or towns, greatly curtailing individual freedom of action, but giving a strength of co-operation much needed in the rude age of feudal tyranny. By the fourteenth century they had become so numerous that we find fifty-two at Bruges and fifty-nine at Ghent.*

In the nineteenth century, with its hurry and bustle, the anxiety of every man to make more money than his neighbor, and the blind admiration of accumulated wealth, the guild system of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries seems like a peaceful dream. The competition of modern times, the outgrowth of the ideas of individual freedom inherited from our Germanic ancestors, has, perhaps, made life easier to live, but has taken away much of the charm of living. These craftsmen of the Middle Ages were trained to do good work, for love of

---

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. v. They existed in all the towns. In 1367 there were over forty in Dordrecht. Geddes's "John De Witt," i. 14.

it, from pride in their handicraft, and not from a desire for great wages that in time would enable them to rise in the social scale. It was honor enough to be a good workman, and that reputation secured all the comforts of existence. The same spirit extended through all classes, and has always characterized the Netherlanders. They are shrewd enough at a bargain, are industrious and frugal, but they have never displayed the feverish anxiety to get riches which is the curse of England and America. Their merchants and manufacturers have always taken time to cultivate literature, science, the arts, and, above all, the domestic virtues. In the days when the guilds were in their glory there was much less distinction between the rich and the poor than exists at present. The guild-houses were something like our modern clubs, where all the members stand on terms of equality. There the younger workmen, accompanied by their wives, met their seniors and employers; there they entertained strangers of their own craft, exchanged ideas, and developed a sentiment of comradeship which, while it gave strength to their order, also gave a feeling of contentment which is unfortunately rare in modern life.*

Albert Dürer has left a charming account of the reception given him in 1520 by the Painters' Guild at Antwerp. "On Sunday," says he, "the painters invited

---

* Probably no reader needs to be reminded how the modern world, reacting from the doctrines of the "Manchester School," with its motto, "The race to the swift, and the devil take the hindmost," is turning back towards the guild system of the Middle Ages. Our trades-unions, which, with all their imperfections, have been of inestimable value to the working classes, mark a step in this direction. In addition is the modern legislation in Germany for the pensioning of old faithful workmen, and that proposed in England for their insurance.

me to their guild-hall with my wife and maid-servant. They had a quantity of silver plate, and costly furniture, and most expensive food. All their wives were with them, and as I was led in to the table, every one stood up in a row on either side, as if they had been bringing in some great lord. Among them were men of very high standing, all of whom behaved with great respect and kindness towards me." While at table, the syndic of the magistrates came in and gave four cans of wine, saying that they sent it to do him honor. Next came Master Peter, the town carpenter, with a present of two cans of wine. "When we had been making merry together up to a late hour of the night, they accompanied us home in honor with lanterns, and prayed me to rely confidently on their good-will. So I thanked them, and lay down to sleep."*

For the most part each guild inhabited a separate quarter of the town, and over every quarter two officers were appointed by the burgomasters, whose duty it was to keep a list of all men in their districts capable of bearing arms, to see that their arms were in readiness, and to assemble them at the order of the magistrates, or upon the ringing of the great town bell. Over all these officers were placed two, three, or four captains of the burgher guards. When the town bell rang, every citizen was bound to obey the summons, at any hour of the day or night. When called out to service within the walls, the several guilds acted under their own banner; but in defence of the state they were accustomed to march under the standard of the town, and dressed in the city livery. As they were under constant drill, had their arms always ready, and were thoroughly organized,

* Albert Dürer's "Journal."

it was the work of an incredibly short space of time to man the walls and put a city in a posture of defence.*

The towns were surrounded by walls, ramparts, and moats, and entered through massive gates with portcullis and drawbridge. Within, the streets were narrow and tortuous, to lessen the advantage of cavalry, archers, and crossbow-men. Many of the houses boasted of a circular tower, the upper floor of which, reached only by a ladder, afforded a temporary retreat to the household when pursued by a victorious enemy, foreign or domestic.† Thus protected, and with a population every member of which was trained to the use of arms, liberty found a refuge during the centuries in which most civil rights were elsewhere crushed under the iron heel of force.

Without the walls, however, the city militia could, as a rule, make little stand against the cavalry and heavy men at arms of the feudal barons. Yet, early in the fourteenth century, when Flanders was a fief of France, the Low Countries taught the world a lesson which was never entirely forgotten. Philip the Fair, having imprisoned the Count of Flanders, determined to deprive the Flemish cities of their chartered rights, and to rule there as he ruled at home. The result was an uprising of the burghers, who, in 1302, under the walls of Courtrai, met the French army in a pitched battle. On the one side were the picked knights, the flower of the French nobility; on the other a collection of traders and artisans, merchants, weavers, and butchers. But in the marshy ground about the city the heavy men at arms became a mob, and fell like cattle before the long pikes of their antagonists. So great was the slaughter of belted

---

* Davies's "Holland," i. 80.

† Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. v.

knights that Flemish chronicles call this the "Day of the Golden Spurs." For the first time the feudal system had broken down on the field of battle. The glamour was gone. In the marshes of the Netherlands a new force had been developed, which, though often temporarily overpowered, was to grow in strength until the final struggle with the whole might of Spain.*

Next above the guilds stood the organization which they looked up to as the author of their being and the protector of their privileges—the chartered city or town. Many of these towns were old, with prescriptive rights of long continuance; but it was not until the twelfth century that they began to receive the written charters which formally defined and guaranteed their liberties. These charters were granted by the counts or lords of the various provinces, were sometimes gained by force, oftener bought with hard-earned gold, but always guarded with the most jealous care. Although differing in details, these instruments were in their main features much alike through all the seventeen provinces. They conferred the power to make municipal ordinances and regulations for the conduct of trade, to levy taxes, administer justice in all civil cases, and to punish the lower grades of crime. Even the right to inflict capital punishment was given to some of the more favored towns. In few, if any of them, however, was there an approach to a democracy in later times. That had passed away with the advance of wealth, the rich merchants and manufacturers who secured the charters having generally absorbed the power originally lodged in the whole body of freemen.† Still, offices were held for

* Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. iii.

† Liege, however, as late as the fifteenth century elected its magis-

short terms, and in Holland special regulations were in force by which no two members of the government could be within a certain degree of consanguinity; thus preventing the whole authority from being lodged in the hands of a few families, as happened in the cities of Italy, especially those of Genoa and Florence.*

Antwerp may be taken as a type of the large towns of the lower provinces, and its form of government illustrates the amount of freedom secured there in the middle of the sixteenth century. At that time it had outstripped Bruges, and had become the commercial capital of the world. Next to Paris it was the largest city in Europe. In its superb exchange five thousand merchants were daily congregated. At its wharves twenty-five hundred vessels often lay at once, and five hundred went and came in a single day. Guicciardini says that the city contained ten thousand carts constantly employed in carrying merchandise to and from the neighboring country, besides hundreds of wagons for passengers, and five hundred coaches used by people of distinction.† Among its inhabitants were one hundred and twenty-four goldsmiths who acted as bankers.‡

---

trates annually by universal suffrage, all male citizens above the age of sixteen having the right to vote, and being eligible to office. Kirk's "Charles the Bold," i. 329.

* Davies's "Holland," i. 89.

† In 1564, about the time of the appearance of Guicciardini's book, the first coach was introduced into England, being imported from Holland for the use of Queen Elizabeth. Nathan Drake's "Shakespeare and his Times," p. 415. It caused great astonishment among the islanders. Some said it was "a great sea-shell brought from China;" others, "that it was a temple in which cannibals worshipped the devil."

‡ Many of the merchants were possessed of enormous wealth. The Fuggers, a German family with headquarters at Augsburg, but with

The sovereign was simply "Marquis of Antwerp," and was sworn to govern according to the ancient charters and laws. He was represented by a stadtholder as an executive officer. There were four bodies or estates of the city which managed its affairs. First, the senate, half of whose members were renewed annually, being appointed by the stadtholder from a quadruple number nominated by the senate itself and by the deacons of the guilds; second, the board of ancients or ex-senators; third, twenty-six ward-masters, selected by the senate from a triple number on nomination by the wards; fourth, fifty-four deans of the guilds, also selected by

---

a branch house at Antwerp, furnish the most notable example of the vast fortunes accumulated on the Continent by manufactures and commerce during the Middle Ages. Antony, one of the two brothers, who died just before this time, left six million gold crowns, besides jewels and other valuable property, and landed possessions in all parts of Europe and in both the Indies. It was of him that the Emperor Charles V., when viewing the royal treasures at Paris, exclaimed: "There is at Augsburg a linen-weaver who could pay as much as this with his own gold." Of him also the story is told that, receiving on one occasion a visit from the emperor, he heated the halls of his princely dwelling with cinnamon-wood, and kindled the fire with bonds for an immense sum, representing money borrowed from him by his royal guest. In wealth the Fuggers were the Rothschilds of their time, while in political influence they far surpassed this modern family. Both brothers were ennobled by Charles, and in 1619 forty-seven counts and countesses were numbered among their descendants. Later on some of them became princes of the empire, and in the beginning of this century their landed estates covered about four hundred and forty square miles. Like the other Continental merchants of their time, Antony and his brother Raimond were liberal patrons of literature and the arts. Their houses were filled with rare paintings and costly books; they supported artists and musicians, and founded hospitals, schools, and charitable institutions almost without number.

the senate from a triple number of candidates presented by their constituents. These four branches divided between them most of the functions of the government. The senate sat as an appellate court, and also appointed two burgomasters, two pensionaries or legal counsellors, and all lesser magistrates and officials of the city. The chief duty of the ward-masters was to enroll, muster, and train the militia. The deans of the guilds examined candidates for admission to the guilds, and settled disputes among the members. The four bodies, when assembled together, constituted the general court, legislature, or common council of the city; but no tax could be imposed except with the consent of all four branches, voting separately.* As the guilds had long before this time passed under the control of the wealthy members, and as the suffrage was confined to a limited class, the government was essentially aristocratic, but it was free from most of the evils of an hereditary aristocracy. All the members, except the ex-senators, went back after a short term of service to their constituents—like themselves engaged in industrial pursuits—and thus felt the sense of direct accountability. They would also naturally feel unwilling, while in office, to pass laws injurious to the common good, of which they were so soon to experience the ill effects.

In Holland, and in the northern provinces generally, the form of town government was somewhat simpler. The senate was composed of two, three, or four burgomasters, and a certain number of *schepens*, or sheriffs, generally seven. Together these officers administered the affairs of the town, but the schepens sitting alone formed a civil and criminal court. The sovereign was

* Motley, i. 84.

represented by an official called a *schout*, whom he appointed, but sometimes from three candidates named by the senate. A Great Council of the citizens, possessing certain property qualifications, met annually, and chose eight or nine "Good Men;" these in turn elected the burgomasters and the candidates, from whom the schout, as representative of his master, selected the schepens.*

The municipal government and the privileges of the towns extended over a certain space outside the walls, which was constantly extended by favor or purchase from the sovereign. Beyond these limits lay the open country with its rural population, forming the domains of the nobles and abbeys, and governed by bailiffs, whose office was analogous to that of the city schout. Here, especially in the southern provinces, there was much less liberty than within the towns. And yet serfdom was abolished in Flanders in the thirteenth century, and the condition of the peasant would, in one respect at least, compare favorably with that of a person of the same class to-day. He was an hereditary tenant, and could not be evicted from his little plot of land, nor subjected to an annual or capricious increase of rent; neither could he be compelled to pay for the results of improvements which he had made himself.† Some of the village communities obtained charters from their lords, but they had not the strength to oppose force with force when their charters were violated, and they

* Davies, "Holland," i. 80, etc.

† Hutton's "Van Arteveld," chap. vi. This system, worthy of attention from persons interested in the history of Ireland, still prevails in Groningen, and to it the great prosperity of the farmers of that state is generally attributed. "Holland and its People," De Amicis, p. 386. In England serfdom lingered on until the reign of Elizabeth, and, perhaps, a little later. Gneist, ii. 329.

were continually subject to the tyranny of their powerful neighbors in the towns.

As the cities grew in wealth, strength, and importance, they acquired rights beyond those of mere local self-government, for we see them sending deputies to the states or legislatures of the separate provinces; thus forming with the nobles, and the clergy in some cases, the parliamentary power of the nation. When this right was first acquired by the municipalities does not seem to be established, but we find it fully settled in Flanders as early as 1286.* It probably arose from the custom of consulting with them upon matters relating to war or foreign alliances, questions in which they were particularly interested, and as to which their support would be essential to the sovereign. Thus the treaty which the Count of Holland made with Edward I. of England in 1281 was guaranteed by the towns. Shortly afterwards, the towns of Holland, large and small, are seen sending their deputies to the assembly of the states, to consider questions of taxation; but by the fifteenth century this privilege was substantially, and by the next century wholly, confined to the six principal cities of Dordrecht, Harlem, Delft, Leyden, Amsterdam, and Gouda.†

As it would be useless to discuss the organization of all the provincial states, we may confine our view to that of Holland, which is the most important for our purposes. Here the clergy had no representation. The six towns sent deputies elected by their senates, each town, however, whatever its population, having but one

* Motley, i. 37. Nine years before an English Parliament.

† Davies's "Holland," i. 83; Motley, i. 37. In the seventeenth century it was extended to twelve other towns.

vote. The nobles also sent deputies, but they had only one vote conjointly. Thus the towns stood against the nobles as six to one, forming a great contrast to the early English parliaments. No measure could be adopted, nor any tax imposed, without the consent of each of the seven bodies represented; and if any new question arose as to which they were uninstructed, the deputies were obliged to postpone decision until after consultation with their principals. In times of peace no particular evil resulted from this extreme states-rights doctrine, but in times of war it became a fertile source of weakness, irresolution, and delay. The powers exercised by the states were of course a shifting quantity, expanding under weak rulers, and shrinking under powerful and arbitrary ones. The most essential, however, that of levying taxes, no sovereign of Holland ever ventured to dispute before the time of Philip II. of Spain.* It appears to have been competent for any town to call an assembly, but the more common practice was to petition the count or his council to do so, and he usually convoked them at The Hague, or at some other place in which he was residing.

Although the nobles had but one vote in the assembly, there was another body in which they had great power. This was the council of state, or supreme court, formed of the chief members of the nobility, selected by the counts. The council of state assisted the count in the administration of public affairs, guaranteed all treaties with foreign powers, and in its judicial capacity took cognizance of capital offences, both in the towns, unless otherwise provided by their charters, and in the open country. To this court, usually presided over by the

* Davies's "Holland," i. 86.

count in person, lay an appeal in civil causes from all the inferior courts of the province.*

Such, in outline, was the general form of government in the countship of Holland, and that of the other states was much the same in character, although, as I shall show in another place, the system in some of the states still farther north was much more democratic. How essentially it differed from that in England, and how it affected the colonists of America, we shall see hereafter. The seventeen provinces were, as already stated, originally separate and distinct nationalities, lordships, and fiefs; but in the course of time, beginning in 1384, by marriage, purchase, or conquest, all except three gravitated to the House of Burgundy.† Still, each state always retained its separate existence, with its individual rights and privileges, its own assembly and council of state, and its own stadtholder, who, appointed by the sovereign, acted as his representative.

In 1477, Charles the Bold, whose fiery passions, chivalric daring, and wild ambition had for ten years bewildered Europe, fell in battle by an unknown hand, leaving but one child, a daughter, Mary, twenty years of age. Louis XI. was on the throne of France, and at once seized the opportunity to take possession of the Duchy of Burgundy, as a lapsed fief, and to lay claim to all the Netherlands. The Duchess Mary was at Ghent, and, under the advice of her guardians, called a grand congress of all the fourteen provinces then belonging to the House of Burgundy, to consider ways and means to resist the French aggressions. This was an important event, for it was the first meeting of the States-General,

* Davies's "Holland," i. 83.

† Kirk's "Charles the Bold," i. 56.

or General Congress of the Netherlands, which played so great a part in all the subsequent history of the Low Countries.

It was also important in another aspect. Under the rule of Charles the Bold, as well as under that of his father, Philip the Good, many inroads had been made on the ancient prescriptive rights of the various states. The time had now come to retrieve the past and secure the future, and the keen-witted deputies summoned to the general assembly were not slow to improve their opportunity. The States-General were called together to grant subsidies for the war with France. The deputies expressed a willingness to render every service in their power, but demanded that their grievances should be first redressed. The duchess reluctantly gave way, and the result was a formal charter for the separate provinces, written, sealed, and sanctioned by the oath of the sovereign and her guardians.* The charter granted to Holland, called the "Groot Privilegie," or "Great Privilege," is worthy of particular attention.

Its chief provisions were the following: The duchess should not marry without the consent of the nobles and the states; she should bestow the offices of the country on natives only, no person being allowed to hold two at the same time, and none to be let out to farm. The Council of Holland was thenceforth to consist of eight members besides the stadtholder—six Hollanders and two Zeelanders—and no cause of which the municipal courts had jurisdiction was to be brought before it ex-

* Motley, in various places, speaks of the old chartered rights of the provinces. As matter of fact, few, if any of them, had charters before this time. Their rights, unlike those of the cities, rested in prescription.

cept by way of appeal. The right *de non evocando*, or exemption from prosecution out of their province, was to be preserved to all the inhabitants inviolate. The towns might hold assemblies with each other or with the states, where and as often as they judged necessary. No new tolls or other burdens should be enforced without the consent of the states, and the freedom of trade and commerce should be maintained.* Neither the duchess nor her successors should declare war, offensive or defensive, without the consent of the states; and in case they did so, no one should be bound to serve. No commands of the sovereign should prevail against the privileges of the towns. The Dutch language should be used in all decrees and letters-patent. No coin should be struck, nor any alteration made in the standard of

---

* How carefully and wisely the Netherlanders maintained the freedom of trade can be seen from an incident which occurred so far back as the reign of Edward I. of England. That monarch, in a letter addressed to Robert, Earl of Flanders, states that he has learned of an active intercourse carried on between the Scotch and the Flemings; and as the Scotch had taken part with Robert Bruce, who was in rebellion against him and excommunicated by the pope, he begged that the earl would put a stop to this intercourse, and exclude the Scotch from his dominions. The earl's answer was full of expressions of respect for the English king, whom he desired to please, but he said frankly, as to the main question: "We must not conceal it from your majesty that our country of Flanders is open to all the world, where every person finds a free admission. Nor can we take away this privilege from persons concerned in commerce without bringing ruin and destruction upon our country. If the Scotch go to our ports, and our subjects go to theirs, it is neither the intention of ourselves nor our subjects to encourage them in their error, but only to carry on our traffic, without taking any part with them." —Rymer's "Fœdera," iii. 771. This was always the policy of the Netherland States and the Dutch Republic.

money, without the approbation of the states. The towns should not be forced to contribute to any petition for money, unless they had first consented to it, and the petition should be presented to the states by the sovereign in person.*

This was a pretty broad instrument for the fifteenth century, when freedom was being throttled all over the rest of Europe. The duchess, to be sure, afterwards declared it invalid, as obtained from her when a minor, and her successors repudiated it and disregarded many of its obligations, treating it as the kings of England had treated Magna Charta. But to the people it stood as a memento of the past and a prophecy of the future. They claimed that its provisions were not novel, but that it only summed up the privileges which they possessed before the dukes of Burgundy attempted to introduce the despotic system which prevailed in France.†

The Lady Mary marries the son of the Emperor of Germany, and thus the Netherlands pass to the House of Austria, and so down to Charles V., who acquires the three remaining provinces, including democratic Friesland.‡ In 1548, seven years before the abdication of his father, Philip II. visited the country to receive the homage of his future subjects, and to exchange oaths of mutual fidelity. As he passed from state to state the people swore fealty to their coming sovereign, and he in return swore to respect their various rights and privileges. In Holland he took an oath "well and truly to

---

* Davies, i. 284, etc.

† Grotius, "De Antiq. Reip. Bat." cap. v.

‡ Grattan. Froissart, who wrote about 1380, said that the Frisians were a very unreasonable race for not recognizing the authority of the great lords.

maintain all the privileges and freedom of the nobles, cities, communities, subjects—lay and clerical—of the province of Holland and West Friesland, to them granted by my ancestors, counts and countesses of Holland; and, moreover, their customs, traditions, usages, and rights which they now have and use." * His father and grandfather had sworn to maintain only the limited privileges admitted by the usurping House of Burgundy, but he bound himself to maintain all ever granted by any of his predecessors. They, however, had been rather better than their promises—for, in the main, they had respected all the privileges of the states and cities—but he proved much worse than his. The right of self-taxation he, for the first time, attempted to set aside. The result was revolution: the people demanded all their privileges, and the Magna Charta of Holland became the foundation of the Dutch Republic.

Passing now from the question of the civil government, and reserving for another place a discussion of some features in the legal system of the country, let us next look at the subject of education in the Netherlands. Here we shall see why the Reformation made such rapid advances among this people; and when we add a view of the state of public and private morals, we shall be able to understand the character of the Dutch Puritan, and why it was that little Holland became for so many years the bulwark of Protestantism as well as the refuge of religious and civil liberty in Europe.

When learning began to revive after the long sleep of the Middle Ages, Italy experienced the first impulse. Next came Germany and the contiguous provinces of the Low Countries. The force of the movement in

* Motley, i. 135.

these regions is shown by an event of great importance, not always noticed by historians. In 1400, there was established at Deventer, in the northeastern province of the Netherlands, an association or brotherhood, usually called Brethren of the Life in Common. In their strict lives, partial community of goods, industry in manual labor, fervent devotion, and tendency to mysticism, they bore some resemblance to the modern Moravians. But they were strikingly distinguished from the members of this sect by their earnest cultivation of knowledge, which was encouraged among themselves and promoted among others by schools, both for primary and advanced education. In 1430 the Brethren had established forty-five branches, and by 1460 more than thrice that number. They were scattered through different parts of Germany and the Low Countries, each with its school subordinate to the head college at Deventer.*

It was in these schools, in the middle of the fifteenth century, that a few Germans and Netherlanders were, as Hallam says, roused to acquire that extensive knowledge of the ancient languages which Italy as yet exclusively possessed. Their names should never be omitted in any remembrance of the revival of letters; for great was their influence upon subsequent times. Chief among these men were Wessels, of Groningen, "one of those who contributed most steadily to the purification of

* "Their schools were," says Eickhorn, "the first genuine nurseries of literature in Germany, so far as it depended on the knowledge of languages; and in them was first taught the Latin, and, in process of time, the Greek and Eastern tongues." Groningen had also a school (St. Edward's) of considerable merit, while at Zwoll, not far distant, was another, over which Thomas à Kempis is said to have presided. Hallam's "Introduction to the Literature of Europe," i. 85; Baudry's "European Library," Paris, 1839.

religion;" Hegius, of Deventer, under whom Erasmus obtained his early education, and who probably was the first man to print Greek north of the Alps; Dringeberg, who founded a good school in Alsace; and Longius, who presided over one at Münster.*

Thanks to the influence of these pioneers in learning, education had made great progress among the Netherlanders by the middle of the sixteenth century. They could not, to be sure, as yet rival the science and culture of Italy, but even in some of the upper branches they were taking high rank. Already Erasmus, of Rotterdam, the greatest scholar of the age, had filled all Europe with his fame. Vesalius, of Brussels, physician to Charles V. and Philip II., was dissecting the human body and producing the first comprehensive and systematic view of anatomy.† Sainte Aldegonde was one of the most accomplished men of the age. He spoke and wrote Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, German, and Flemish. He composed poignant Greek epigrams, translated the Psalms from Hebrew into Flemish verse for the use of the Reformed Church, was a profound lawyer and theologian, an eloquent orator, a skilful diplomatist, and a writer of European celebrity.‡ William of Orange himself was no mean scholar. He also spoke and wrote with facility Latin, French, German, Flemish, and Spanish. Apart from these, there was a host of other men

---

* Hallam, i. 142.

† "Vesalius, a native of Brussels, has been termed the founder of human anatomy, and his great work, 'De Humani Corporis Fabrica,' is even yet a splendid monument of art as well as science. It is said, although probably incorrectly, that the figures were designed by Titian." — Whewell's "Hist. of the Inductive Sciences," iii. 394; Hallam, i. 364.

‡ Motley's "United Netherlands," i. 146.

of varied accomplishments, many of them of deep and extensive learning.

Still, the country was not, at this time, distinguished for the great scholarship which, half a century later, was to make the new republic the home of philosophy and science, as well as of the arts. The foundations of this edifice, however, were already laid in the almost universal education of the people. About a century before this period printing from movable type had been invented. That the Hollanders were the inventors may well be doubted; but, however this may be, no other nation ever put the invention to better use. They began at the bottom, and, placing the spelling-book and reader in the hands of every child, at a time when the mass of the English nation was wholly illiterate,* gave to all classes an elementary education. The extent to which the inhabitants of the cities had profited by these advantages, before the outbreak of the war with Spain, may well seem phenomenal even at the present day. Motley, writing of Antwerp in the middle of the sixteenth century, says "it was difficult to find a child of sufficient age who could not write and speak at least two languages."† But this phenomenal education was not confined to the cities. Guicciardini, in describing the people of Holland at this time, tells us that many of the nobles living a retired life devoted themselves wholly to literature, and even the peasants were able to read and write well.‡

In all the principal cities of the Netherlands were to be found the so-called Guilds of Rhetoric. These were associations of mechanics and artisans, who amused themselves with concerts, dramatic exhibitions, and the rep-

* Nathan Drake, "Shakespeare and his Times," p. 210, etc.

† Motley, i. 84. ‡ Davies's "Holland," i. 487.

resentation of allegories, where some moral truth was set forth decked out in all the splendor of costume that art could devise and wealth supply. These performances constituted the chief amusement of the people, and they were always more or less instructive. Certainly their existence throws much light upon the general intelligence.

It would have been strange indeed if, in such a soil, the Reformation had not taken deep and early root. In fact, heresy was a very old story in the Netherlands. From the middle of the twelfth century all the sects which had arisen to combat or correct the abuses of Rome had flourished there. Nowhere was their persecution more relentless, and nowhere was it less successful. With the invention of printing, the old forces working against the Church took on a new life. The cheapening of books led to the rapid multiplication of the Scriptures, and, what was of more importance, their publication in the common tongue. Prior to this time the idea had prevailed that the Bible was only for the learned, and so was to be kept in a language which none others could understand. Throwing it open to the people meant a religious revolution.

In this, the greatest of all steps leading to the Reformation, Holland took a leading part by printing at Delft, in 1477, a Dutch version translated from the Vulgate. Before the appearance of Luther's translation into German, several editions of this work were issued from the presses of Antwerp and Amsterdam. In 1516, Erasmus made an original translation of the New Testament into Latin, and thus paved the way for the Reformation by the novel light which he threw upon the Scriptures. In a preface to this great work, Erasmus expressed the hope that the translation would be continued in all languages,

so that the Gospels and Epistles might be read in every land and by every person. Six years after reading these words, Luther gave to the world his German version of the New Testament. Well was it said that Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched. Again, four years later, Tyndale, also incited by the work of Erasmus, made his translation of the New Testament into English.* This was published at Antwerp in 1526.

In 1535 there appeared the first complete English Bible in print. This was the work of Miles Coverdale, who was employed to make the translation by Jacob van Meteren, of Antwerp, the father of Emanuel, the historian of the Netherlands. The translation, which was from the "Douche and Latin," was made, and the printing was done, at Antwerp, the sheets being sent across the Channel by Meteren, "for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in England."† It was not until 1538 that any translation of the Bible was printed in England. Prior to that date more than fifteen editions of the entire work, and thirty-four editions of the New Testament alone, had been printed in the Netherlands in Dutch and Flemish. In no other country were so many copies of the Scriptures published at that early day; and not even in Germany, the home of the Reformation, were they so generally read.‡

---

* Seebohm's "Protestant Revolution," pp. 99–185.

† The Coverdale Bible was, until recently, supposed to have been translated in England. Its history and the connection of Meteren with it are given in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," 9th ed., article "English Bible." The "Douche" was probably German.

‡ "There can be no sort of comparison between the numbers of these editions, and consequently the eagerness of the people of the Low Countries for Biblical knowledge, and anything that could be found in the Protestant states of the empire."—Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 300.

This exceptional dissemination of the Scriptures explains the religious history of the Netherlands. With the Bible in a known tongue, and through universal education the property of the masses, the Reformation here was inevitable. The same causes which brought it about also gave it a peculiar character—a character common to most movements among this people of republics. It began at the bottom, and worked its way up very slowly. In other countries converts to the new belief were made among the royal classes. In such cases, of course, their subjects became Protestants. In fact, the doctrine was early laid down, and was finally settled at the Diet of Augsburg, which, in 1555, gave a temporary religious peace to Germany, that the people were always to follow the faith of their ruler; in other words, the prince was to choose a religion for his subjects.* This was the theory of the age. "Cujus regio, ejus religio" was the motto. The enforcement of this political doctrine explains the extirpation of heresy in Italy and Spain, and finally in France. Save in one instance, Protestantism continued as a power only in the countries where the sovereigns or great nobles became its early converts. The Netherlands form the one exception to the rule, and because they do so their religious history is of absorbing interest. It may almost be said, in truth, that in every other country of Europe the Reformation was a political movement, while here it was a religious one.†

In 1517, Luther began his contest with Rome by the exhibition of his ninety-five theses against indulgences.

---

* Fisher, "Outlines of History," p. 410.

† It was not until 1573, more than fifty years after the opening of the Reformation, that William of Orange became a Protestant.

Four years later, Charles V., claiming the right to regulate the religion of his subjects in the Netherlands, issued an edict which shows that heresy was gaining ground. "As it appears," says he, "that the aforesaid Martin is not a man, but a devil under the form of a man, and clothed in the dress of a priest, the better to bring the human race to hell and damnation, therefore all his disciples and converts are to be punished with death and forfeiture of all their goods." The next year the pope, at the request of the emperor, sent him an inquisitor-general, and the Inquisition was formally established in the Netherlands.

Work began at once. In 1523, two monks were burned at Brussels for heresy, and it was noticed that the city now began strenuously to favor Lutheranism.* Later on, another edict forbade all reading of the Scriptures, all private assemblies for devotion, and all religious discussions under penalty of death. The flames and the scaffold were called on to enforce these edicts, and yet, strangely enough as it then appeared, the schism spread. In 1533, Mary, the regent, wrote to her brother that "in her opinion all heretics, whether repentant or not, should be prosecuted with such severity as that error might be at once extinguished, care being only taken that the provinces were not entirely depopulated." In 1535, an imperial edict issued at Brussels condemned all heretics to death; repentant males to be executed with the sword, repentant females to be buried alive; the obstinate of both sexes to be burned. Finally, in 1550, a new edict re-enacted all former provisions, and, adding novel offences, made even the entertaining of heretical opinions or the concealment of heretics punishable with

* Motley, i. 77.

death, while directing all judicial officers to render assistance to the Inquisition, any privileges or charters to the contrary notwithstanding.*

How rigorously these laws were enforced is shown by the appalling records of the executioners. History calls Mary of England "Bloody Mary," because in her reign two hundred and seventy-seven persons suffered death for their religion.† These, with a few victims put to death by her father, and some isolated cases in preceding reigns, make up the sum of all the religious martyrs of England until Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558. Now let us look across the Channel. Grotius, who was well informed upon such subjects, says that a hundred thousand heretics were put to death in the Netherlands under the edicts of Charles V.‡ According to Motley, the number has never been placed at a lower mark than fifty thousand.§ If even this latter computation is correct, the victims of the Inquisition in the Netherlands, before the days of Philip II., probably exceeded in number all those who have suffered death under its judgments in all the other countries of Europe combined, from the days of the Reformation until the present time.‖

---

* Motley, i. 77, 80, 261, 331.

† Neal's "History of the Puritans," i. 64.

‡ "Annals," lib. i. 17 (Amsterdam, 1658).

§ Motley, i. 114; Davies's "Holland," i. 498. Prescott, however, questions these figures, "Philip II." i. 380. It may be noted that other modern writers agree with Prescott.

‖ Prior to the appointment of Torquemada, in 1483, as Inquisitor-general of Spain, the victims there had been very few. From 1483 to 1808, the whole number who suffered death in Spain is placed at about 32,000 by Llorente, who was Secretary of the Madrid Inquisition from 1789 to 1791, and claimed to have access to the records. See his "Critical History of the Spanish Inquisition." Catholic writ-

Such was the religious record of this people when, in 1555, the dominion over the seventeen provinces passed to Philip II. of Spain. Already some fifty thousand men and women had laid down their lives for the doctrines of the Reformation, and yet converts were on the increase. In the early days, under the influence of Germany, the theological system of Luther was in the ascendant; but later on the Huguenots from France brought in the doctrines of Calvin, who went to Geneva in 1536, and Calvinism became the faith of the majority of the reformers. This it was that bound them so closely to the Puritans of England, who all accepted substantially the same system of Calvinistic theology. Still, the Lutherans were not insignificant in numbers, and, being found mostly among the upper classes, their influence was considerable. A third sect, larger than the Lutherans, but without political or social influence, was the Anabaptists, or Mennonites, who were found mainly among the poor of Holland.* These people, of whom we shall see much more hereafter, were in some respects the most interesting and picturesque of all, exerting the greatest influence on the independent sects of England and America.

Before closing this chapter, and with it our general view of the progress and condition of the Netherlands

---

ers assert that he has placed the figures too high. Those who were put to death in other countries outside of Spain were too few to run the aggregate up to 50,000. It may not be without interest to notice here that the total number of the victims of the St. Bartholomew Massacre in France, those in Paris and elsewhere, is estimated at from 20,000 to 30,000. Baird's "Rise of the Huguenots in France," ii. 530.

* Prescott's "Philip II.," ii. 22.

at the time of the outbreak with Spain, we may well glance at the state of their private and public morals. We have seen the intellectual advance, the general education, and the wide dissemination of the Bible, which prepared this people to receive religious teachings. All this, however, would have been of little avail as a preparation for the permanent reception of the doctrines of the Reformation, had there not been something beyond a mere intellectual cultivation, or even a religious fervor.

We must remember—and no one can understand the history of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, or even the seventeenth century who loses sight of the fact—that in many countries, and with many persons, there was little connection between morality and religion, and still less between either of these subjects and theological dogmas. To a large class religion was a mere affair of the mind, a question of intellectual belief, having no beneficial influence upon the outer life. Men like Benvenuto Cellini lie, steal, and murder, but are devout Catholics; not hypocritical, but honestly believing that they are watched over by the angelic hosts and visited by spirits from heaven.* Philip II. commits almost every form of sin, violates every rule of morals, and yet dies in the odor of sanctity, suffering the most excruciating agonies with all the fortitude of the early martyrs. He seems never to have doubted the fact of his direct translation to the abodes of bliss, since they were reserved for those who trusted in Mother Church. Perhaps the most remarkable illustration of all is found in the life and writings of

* See his Autobiography, which is as fascinating as any romance and as instructive as any treatise on psychology. It gives the portrait of a real man, an Italian of the early part of the sixteenth century.

Margaret of Angoulême, sister of Francis I., and Queen of Navarre. Here was a woman of a deeply religious nature, mystical—even inclined, it was thought, to Protestantism—herself of a pure life, who writes a series of stories, not only grossly impure, but showing an entire absence of the moral sense. Honor, chivalry, and religion all bloom in the "Heptameron," but morality of any kind has no place.*

Nor was this severance of morality from religion confined to those who belonged to the Church of Rome. Among many of the Protestant sects there was to be found wild religious enthusiasm mingled with a disregard of all the obligations of a moral code. Cromwell, when in power, leads an unchaste life, keeps his mistresses, and is said to have had several illegitimate children; but he is always devout, and dies in the faith, assured of his salvation; not because he repents, but from an intellectual belief that, having once been one of the elect, he must be saved.† The men who built up the English Church, and those who afterwards founded the Commonwealth, were earnest in their theological convictions, and it shows little knowedge of human nature to think of them as hypocrites. Many of them were austere of life and pure of morals, but many others, because they believed in certain theological dogmas, thought themselves absolved from ordinary moral obligations. In all this they were but exhibiting a phase of human nature common to all men at a peculiar stage of their development.

---

* See "Margaret of Angoulême, Queen of Navarre," by Robinson, "Famous Women Series;" also Baird's "Rise of the Huguenots," i. 119, etc.

† Guizot's "Life of Cromwell."

When now we turn to the Protestant states of the Netherlands, we find much less of this separation. There morality and religion commonly went hand in hand. It was because the people were intelligent and moral, before they felt the influence of the religious revival, that the Reformation made such permanent progress in their midst. Protestantism is not the religion for a nation of free livers. Individuals may be affected, whole communities may be swept over with a wave of enthusiasm, but a people cannot permanently stand face to face with their Creator—and that was the idea of the Reformation until theology devised its iron bands to cramp the souls of men—unless beneath a religious zeal there is a foundation of sound public and private morals. This was shown in the experience of the Netherlands. At the outset the southern provinces, more vivacious and with more active intellects, furnished the most zealous converts to the doctrines of the Reformation, but they never formed a majority of the population, and much of the early fervor was soon exhausted. The northern provinces stood faithful to the end, making up in constancy what they seemed to lack in fire. It has been already stated that the ultimate line of cleavage followed that of race; it is an interesting fact that it also followed that of morals.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the lower states of the Netherlands were rather distinguished for high drinking, fast living, and general immorality. By the middle of the sixteenth century this reputation was much modified, Italy and France having thrown all other seats of vice into the shade. Still, there was then, as there always had been, a great contrast in matters of morality between the southern and the northern provinces. Both, it may be observed, had the German vice

of drunkenness largely developed. There was something in the blood, and more in the climate, which predisposed these people to an indulgence which the Latin races looked down on with disgust and horror. Yet, as the same writers who mention the drunkenness also inform us that there were no beggars and no worthless poor in Holland, we must either believe that excessive drinking was not followed by its legitimate results, or that the drunkenness was largely confined to the upper classes. The latter is the more reasonable explanation, for no nation of sots could have done the work which these men accomplished.*

With the exception of this one vice, the people of Holland were distinguished above all the nations of Europe for industry, integrity, and general purity of morals, and these traits of character they never lost. Foreigners sometimes charged them with too great desire for gain, despite their devotion to science and the arts, but no one ever questioned their integrity. Public honesty is of later growth than that of individuals, men in a body often performing acts which singly they would condemn; but even here Holland has no superior in history. Throughout her long war with Spain the national credit stood unimpaired. The towns, when besieged, issued bonds which often were sold at a large discount; and men were found who, as in later times among ourselves, urged that the purchasers should only receive the money they had paid. No such counsels, however, prevailed in a single instance. The debts of the towns, like those of the state, were invariably paid in full.†

---

* Camden says that the English acquired their taste for strong drink in the Netherland wars. "History of Elizabeth."

† Davies's "Holland," *passim.*

Perhaps the most conclusive proof, not only of the high state of morality, but also of the general advancement of the people, is found in the position of their women. Says Guicciardini: "They hold adultery in horror. Their women are extremely circumspect, and are consequently allowed much freedom. They go out alone to make visits, and even journeys, without evil report; they are able to take care of themselves. Moreover, they are housekeepers, and love their households." Nor was that all; the women were educated, and, as among some Continental nations of modern times, mingled in all the business of life, buying and selling, and in many cases taking entire charge of the family property. The virtue of such wives was not that of the harem, whether guarded by eunuchs or duennas; it was the fruit of a high civilization developed on the moral as well as the intellectual side. What part these women took in the great struggle for liberty is a familiar story.

CHAPTER III

REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS—1555–1574

At the first glance it may seem strange that such a people as the Netherlanders submitted to so much religious persecution before rising in rebellion against their sovereign. A little reflection, however, suggests the answer. In the first place, they were pre-eminently a peaceful race, engaged in commerce and manufactures, and for many years unused to war; while their ruler commanded the largest and best-disciplined armies of the world. Next, those who suffered from the Inquisition under Charles V. were all from the poorer classes, and the death of a few thousand scattered peasants or artisans made but little impression on any community three centuries ago. There was no concert of action among the victims or their friends, and they were in a small and weak minority. In addition, the excesses of some of the early reformers excited the fears of the timid, and in the religious excitement of the times many of the supporters of the established church became as zealous in its reformation and defence as were the Protestants in their opposition to it.

Among the people at large, Charles was a great favorite. He was born in the Netherlands, lived much in his native land, spoke the language, was free and jovial in his manners, was a famous soldier, and his countrymen felt proud of him and his achievements. He probably

had designs upon their liberties, and purposed, when he had the opportunity, to make them into one nation. But the time never came; and so, in the main, he respected their ancient rights, even to the point of keeping the Inquisition out of some of the provinces which refused it entrance.

With his son and successor all this was changed. Philip was a stranger, born in Spain. He spoke no language except Spanish; he had no friends except Spaniards; he cared for no country except the one of his nativity. Regardless of their rights, he forced the Inquisition on all the provinces; in violation of his oath, he filled the offices with foreigners; and, unlike his father, he trampled on rich and poor alike. Charles had not ruled in the interest of any particular section of his vast dominions. He had established no capital, but moved about with his court from place to place. The new monarch settled in Madrid. He purposed to build up a gigantic Spanish monarchy, of which his other possessions were to be mere provinces. When these designs finally became apparent, all classes in the Netherlands were aroused, and rebellion was inevitable.

Eleven years elapsed after the abdication of Charles before there was any combined resistance among the people. They were years of misrule, violation of chartered rights, and extension of the Inquisition. At first, Philip had attempted to quarter Spanish troops upon the country, but the abandonment of this scheme had been forced upon him by the indignant protests of the whole community. He himself was in Spain, but he was represented in the Netherlands by Margaret of Parma—a natural daughter of his father—and a council mostly composed of Spaniards. At length, a large number of the wealthy merchants and the lesser nobles were

aroused to demand a cessation of the cruelties practised upon their poorer brethren. They signed a bond of alliance, by which they engaged themselves under oath to resist to the utmost of their power the continuance of the Inquisition, as contrary to all laws human and divine, and to devote their lives and fortunes to the protection of each other. In April, 1566, several hundred of the confederates, plainly clad, appeared before the regent and presented a petition, setting forth that the Inquisition was likely to breed rebellion, and asking her to suspend its operations. Margaret was much disturbed, but made no answer. Seeing her agitation, one of the council cried out: "What, madam! is it possible your highness can fear these beggars?" The words spread like wildfire. The members of the alliance adopted the name hurled at them as a taunt, dressed themselves and their families in plain gray clothes, fastened in their caps a little wooden porringer, and hung about their necks a medal on which a wallet was engraved. Many of them were subsequently to prove recreant to the cause; but the name survived, and the "Beggars" of the sea and land have become historic.

The action of the nobles at once emboldened the common people. Among them, despite the torture and the flames, the Reformation had taken a gigantic stride. At first, they had studied the Bible and held their meetings in private; now, they came out into the plains and public fields around the cities, gathering by thousands, "to show," they said, "how many the Inquisition would have to burn, slay, and banish." Attempts were made by the authorities to disperse these assemblies; and then the reformers went out as if to battle, stationed guards about their encampments, with gun, pike, and sword in hand listened to the fervent elo-

quence of their impassioned preachers, sang one of the old war songs of David, and returned home in military order.

Under such a stimulus soon came the inevitable outbreak. In August, 1566, four months after the "Beggars" had presented their petition to the regent, the customary procession of a miraculous image of the Virgin passed through the streets of Antwerp. As the priests swept along they were greeted by the jeers of the populace: "Mayken! Mayken!" (little Mary) "your hour is come." A riot ensued, the crowd hurried to the cathedral, began to tear down the images, overthrow the altars, cut out the pictures, burn the mass-books, and shatter the gorgeous painted windows. For two days this work of iconoclasm went on; then it passed to the other churches, and thence to the neighboring towns and provinces, until, within a fortnight, five or six hundred sacred edifices had been despoiled of their invaluable art treasures. Strangely enough, all this was the work of but a few persons from the lower classes, who committed no violence to man or woman, and kept none of the plunder for themselves.*

The immediate result of this outbreak was favorable to the reformers. Margaret, in terror, first thought of flight, and then published an "Accord" which abolished the Inquisition and permitted the preaching of the new doctrine. With joy the people began to assemble unarmed, and even to erect buildings for their meetings. The reaction, however, was very speedy. The upper classes in the Netherlands were artistic in all their tastes. Their æsthetic as well as their religious feelings were shocked at the destruction of the treasures, which

* Motley's "Dutch Republic," i. 565, etc.

centuries of devotion had heaped up in their splendid churches. Besides this, all the moderate men feared the effects on business of these popular tumults which would draw down the wrath of Philip. The regent soon discovered the drift of public sentiment and straightway changed her policy. Calling in such troops as she could command, and with the aid of the Catholic nobles, she began a system of repression much more stringent than any ever known before. Uprisings followed in various quarters. A few skirmishes ensued in which the insurgents were easily routed; hundreds were put to death, and some sections almost depopulated by the exile of those who left their homes rather than abandon their religion.

Meanwhile, all eyes were turned to Spain watching for the effect produced on Philip by this last development of Netherland fanaticism. For a time he concealed his purposes, promising to visit the provinces himself, and writing fair words to some of the leading citizens. This was but the lull before the hurricane. Among the chief advisers of the king was a soldier, the Duke of Alva, always prompting him to measures of severity. Some of his other advisers, being civilians, now counselled moderation and concession; Alva urged that these "men of butter" could be ruled only by force. Supply him with troops, he said, and the war should pay for itself, while in addition he would pour a stream of treasure a yard deep into the coffers of the king. Unfortunately for Spain, Philip listened to this advice, and committed to the adviser the command of the expedition which was to crush out civil and religious liberty in the provinces of the Netherlands.

Alva was a typical Spaniard of the day. He was the greatest captain of a state which was now the lead-

ing military power of Europe. To understand him and his measures, we must glance at the history of Spain for the preceding century. Such a glance will show how much evil may be wrought, even in a few short years, by the abuse of untrammelled power.

In 1469, just about one hundred years before, Ferdinand of Aragon was married to Isabella of Castile. At that time Spain gave almost the fairest promise for the future of any country in the world. In the south lay Granada, inhabited by the Moors, who had reached a degree of excellence in agriculture and in several of the mechanical arts unequalled in any other part of Europe. Proximity to them had educated the Spaniards of Castile, whose cities were unsurpassed by any, except by those of Italy and the Netherlands. All through the provinces were scattered the Jews who had emulated the Arabs in keeping alive the flame of learning during the Middle Ages. In agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, the three great sources of national wealth, the people were making rapid progress. In popular education they for some time led all their contemporaries.* Their libraries were unrivalled, and their universities and academies had for centuries attracted scholars from all the European states. Spain possessed also a fair measure of liberty. The government of Castile was as free as that of England, and that of Aragon beyond all question far more so.†

---

* The Moors seem to have been the first in modern times to establish free schools, of which there were eighty in Cordova alone. Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella," i. 285.

† Macaulay's "Essay on Hallam's Constitutional History." Some of their important institutions, as I shall show hereafter, have been copied by other nations, and as usual without acknowledgment.

The free institutions of Spain, like those which crop out in the history of England before the days of the Tudors, arose from the power of the nobles and the weakness of the central government. The country was divided into separate provinces. The old Gothic love of liberty still survived among the nobles; it made them chivalric, but turbulent and unruly. Ferdinand and Isabella, by consummate address and masterly statesmanship, built up a powerful consolidated monarchy, as the Tudors did in England, and as Louis XI. did in France, but they crushed out the spirit of freedom. The peculiar condition of the country, and the great religious awakening for which that age is distinguished, made this a comparatively easy task.

First, a fanatical zeal was aroused against the Jews, and for their extirpation extraordinary powers were confided to the sovereigns, which, once acquired, were used against all classes. Then, a crusade was organized to expel the Moors. The ten years' holy war which followed completed the royal work. The monarchs wrested from the Cortes all their judicial functions, and conferred them on tribunals of their own creation. They obtained from the pope the privilege of filling the bishoprics and grand-masterships of the military orders. They reorganized the militia of the cities, and created a standing army to overawe and subdue the nobles. Finally, they established the Inquisition, ostensibly for use against the Jews and Moors, but in its development it became a terror to all Spain. The sovereigns had the power to name the Grand Inquisitor and all the judges, and thus secured an engine of political tyranny unequalled in the world.*

* Fisher's "Outlines of Universal History," p. 370.

Meantime, the people were intoxicated with military ambition and the triumphs of religious fanaticism. In 1492, the history of Spain was marked by three events which form the turning-point in her career. They were the expulsion of the Jews, the capture of Granada, followed by the expulsion of the larger part of the Moors, and the discovery of America. The disastrous effect of the first two acts has been noticed by many writers. The Jews and the Moors were the most enlightened, the most industrious, the most progressive people of the whole peninsula. Driving out one hundred and sixty thousand of one race and a million of the other dealt a severe blow to the national prosperity. Still, it is questionable whether the country suffered as much in the end from this cause as from the voyage of the immortal Columbus.

The opening-up of the New World has been called the greatest event in history. So perhaps it was, but to Spain it was the greatest curse. Before that time her people were tilling the soil, building up manufactures, and spreading their commerce, laying the foundations of a substantial and enduring prosperity. The wealth of Mexico and Peru changed them into a race of adventurers and robbers. Who would cultivate the land, or toil at the loom or by the furnace, when bold men across the seas were winning with the sword treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones, which they could not count, but measured by the yard!* In 1512, Gonsalvo, the Great Captain, had raised an army for service in Italy. Before marching, an order came for its disbandment. At the time a squadron, bound for the New World, was lying in the Guadalquivir. Its complement was fixed

* Prescott's "Conquest of Peru."

at twelve hundred men, but at once three thousand of the recent volunteers, many of them representing noble families, clad in splendid armor on which their all had been expended, hastened to Seville and pressed to be admitted into the Indian armada. Seville itself was said, about this period, to have been almost depopulated by the general fever of adventure, so that it seemed to be tenanted only by females.*

The demoralization extended to all classes of the community. Honest labor came to be despised in the race for ill-gotten wealth. Gold and silver poured in, fortunes were amassed; but the prosperity was all illusive, for, with agriculture and manufactures neglected, the land was impoverished and the sun of Spain was going down. It set, however, in a blaze of military glory. The men trained in the wars of Ferdinand and Isabella became under Charles V. the bravest, best-disciplined, and most skilful soldiers since the days of the Roman legions. Among no race has ever been shown greater constancy in hardships, or greater prowess in the field. In the Old World, as in the New, they fought not alone for glory, but for the spoils of victory. When captured cities were given up to plunder, private property distributed among the conquerors, and prisoners were for heavy sums ransomed from their captors, bold and adventurous spirits looked to no other means than war for making or adding to their fortunes.†

---

* Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella," iii. 370, 471.

† The prejudice against honest labor which had grown up in Spain must be kept in mind, if we would understand the conduct of the Spaniards in the Netherlands. Not only were the insurgents rebels and heretics, but, being engaged in industrial pursuits, they were looked down upon as men entitled to none of the rights accorded

A century of such training had bred the man who now turned his hungry eyes upon the rich and fertile Netherlands. The Duke of Alva had been a soldier since his boyhood, having fought in Italy, in Germany, and against the Turks, winning his way to the highest honors. While he was an infant his father was killed in an engagement with the Moors; the son grew up sworn to wreak vengeance on all unbelievers. In his youth he was the favorite cavalier of romance and song. Married at twenty-two, he had in seventeen days ridden from Hungary to Spain and back, in order to see his bride for a few hours. All this, however, had long since passed away. Under forty years of Spanish warfare his youthful chivalry had ripened into fanaticism, cruelty, and avarice. At sixty years of age, tall, thin, erect, with a long face and yellow cheeks, piercing black eyes, and a sable silvered beard, he looked the imperturbable man of fate. The army now intrusted to his command numbered only ten thousand men. The force seems small for the subjugation of even seventeen little provinces, but it was made up of the picked veterans of Europe. With a thousand less efficient troops, Cortez had taken Mexico, and with a hundred and eighty Pizarro had reduced Peru. Besides this, behind the commander stood the wealth of Spain, and the ability to hire all the mercenaries of the world.

In August, 1567, Alva and his army reached the Netherlands. There they found an outward calm. The public preaching of the reformers had been suppressed, and most of the nobles showed contrition for their previous disloyalty. The regent was satisfied that all dis-

---

to members of the noble or military orders. This feeling, as we shall see hereafter, was not confined to the Spaniards.

turbances were at an end, and implored her brother and his representative to pardon the past and pursue a policy of peace. Of this the Spaniards had no idea. What! pardon men whose bodies they purposed to burn, and their estates to confiscate? What would become of the gold-mine which they had marched so far to open?

Alva began his work with celerity and decision. The month after his arrival he organized, without semblance of law, the tribunal for the punishment of those engaged in the late disorders, which has made his name so infamous. He called it the Council of Troubles, but it soon acquired the title of the Council of Blood. It was composed of twelve members, but only two of the number (both Spaniards) had a vote. Even these two could only recommend, the final decision resting with Alva, who soon became governor-general, as the regent threw up her office in despair.

In this council, Alva worked seven hours a day. Before three months had passed, eighteen hundred persons had suffered death by its summary proceedings, some of them the highest in the land.* It had no rules and no regular system of practice; an accusation was made, depositions were obtained in secret and submitted to the board, and then the sentence of death almost immediately followed. The one great crime seemed to be that of having wealth. Men guilty of this offence had little assurance of safety except in flight.

The effect of these proceedings upon the peaceful Netherlanders may be imagined, it certainly cannot be described. A terror seized upon them, such as is felt by the peasants living on Vesuvius when the crater begins to belch forth liquid flame. Still, the latter can flee

* Motley, ii. 136.

before their enemy; but very soon no such refuge was left to the miserable men who withered before this fiery blast. They were leaving the country in such numbers that Alva placed a substantial embargo on all vessels, and established a system for the examination of travellers by land, which made escape almost impossible. However, the exodus to England had already taken place, which, as we shall see hereafter, was largely to affect her future.

From the character of his reception in the Netherlands, Alva may have considered the subjugation of the country an easy task. If so, he was speedily undeceived. To be sure, the common people seemed cowed by terror, and most of the nobles and the wealthy citizens attempted to make their peace. Still, there remained two enemies unsubdued, and while they were free the struggle was not ended. The one was a man, William, Prince of Orange; the other was the sea, the friend of liberty, the vassal of the Netherlands.

The man did not at that time appear to Alva a formidable adversary. For us he stands out on the page of history as one of its most heroic characters. Unlike our Washington, whom in many traits of character he much resembled, he was born to high rank, wealth, and luxury. From his earliest youth he had been the associate of emperors and kings. A soldier, an orator, a diplomatist, he loved society and pleasure. All these accessories of life he cheerfully abandoned. For his country he sacrificed his private fortune, sought exile, poverty, almost disgrace. He lived to see his well-loved Holland substantially redeemed, and died the "Father William" of his people.*

* He was the author of the saying, imputed to so many others,

Born in 1533, at fifteen he became the page and favorite of Charles V., at eighteen one of his trusted counsellors, at twenty-one commander of an army. When the emperor went through the magnificent ceremony of his abdication, it was upon the arm of William of Orange that he leaned. Under Philip he was sent as a hostage to the Court of France. While there the incident occurred from which he has been called the "Silent." The French monarch supposed that his princely guest was fully in the confidence of the King of Spain. Hence, one day while hunting, he unfolded to him all the details of a scheme by which the two monarchs, reconciled with each other, were to crush out heresy in their respective kingdoms. The prince listened in silence to the fateful secret, neither then nor thereafter, by word or action, betraying his feelings at the revelation. Forewarned, however, he devoted his life to counteract the plot, and to rid his country of the hated Spaniards. He was a Catholic, but he believed in religious toleration; he was a Netherlander, and therefore believed in civil liberty.

When Philip returned to Spain he appointed William of Orange stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. He was also made a member of the grand council of Margaret, the regent. Knowing the gravity of the situation, he went cautiously about his life-task. He took little part in demonstrations, but set out to fortify himself impregnably in the hearts of the people. Always counselling moderation, he softened the rigors of the government, while so acting as to force its hand. He aided in putting down the iconoclastic riots, but then

---

"A friend is cheaply bought by a bow." It was his answer when reproached with too much condescension to the poor. Du Maurier, p. 167. Davies's "Holland," ii. 149.

interposed on the side of mercy. No other man in the country seemed so fully to realize what Philip intended by sending Alva with an army to the Netherlands. When their coming was definitely settled, William resolved on flight.

The exile, as Prince of Orange, had estates in Germany, and thither he retired. He had strong friends among the Protestants of the empire, and with them, with the Huguenots of France, and the Puritans of England, began to build up a party against Spain. Among his firmest allies were his own four brothers, who through good and evil report clung to his fortunes, three of them laying down their lives in the contest for liberty. With their aid, by subscriptions from the Netherland cities and from the refugees in England, through the sale of his own jewels, plate, and tapestry, and, when these were gone, by loans on his individual credit, several armies were raised with which in the summer and fall of 1568 he levied war on Alva. His commissions ran in the name of Philip, just as those of the Long Parliament of England subsequently ran in the name of Charles I.

Events proved that raw levies could not make stand against the disciplined troops of Spain, and that the mass of the people were not yet ripe for revolution. In an early engagement, to be sure, the insurgents achieved a success by entrapping the enemy into a morass, as their ancestors had done at the battle of Courtrai; but they were ultimately routed in the open country, with a loss of seven thousand against a Spanish loss of seven. Upon this venture the Prince of Orange had risked his all. Now, broken in fortune, with his Netherland estates under confiscation, harassed by creditors, and with military prestige gone, he joined the Hugue-

nots in France, to fight there the conflict which at home seemed temporarily hopeless.*

One enemy appeared to be subdued. In the autumn of 1568 Alva erected a monument at Antwerp to commemorate his triumph. It consisted of a colossal statue of himself, with a man having two heads lying at his feet. What he intended the prostrate figure to represent was explained to no one. Some thought that it represented the Prince of Orange and his brother Louis; some, Egmont and Horn, who had recently been executed; others, the nobles and commons of the Netherlands. As the duke was one day busied in its contemplation, a companion, accustomed to take liberties, remarked "that the heads grinned so horribly, it was to be feared they would wreak a signal vengeance if ever they should rise again." † The people treasured up the prophecy. To Alva it must have seemed absurd. Construe the riddle as one might, at least he had the two heads under foot. But he left out of calculation his other enemy, the sea.

While in France, the Prince of Orange was advised by Coligny to abandon for the present all thought of operations by land, which were expensive and therefore now impracticable, and to confine his warfare to the ocean. The wise suggestion was speedily adopted. There was no money for the equipment of a navy, but there were scores of brave and hardy sailors, owning

---

* Some idea of the state in which he had formerly lived can be gathered from the fact that on one occasion, desiring to reduce his establishment, he dismissed twenty-eight head cooks. To have served in his household was a sufficient recommendation for a servant to any prince in Germany. Prescott's "Philip II.," i. 487.

† Davies's "Holland," i. 565.

their own vessels, who were only too happy to carry on a private war. With commissions to cruise against the Duke of Alva and his adherents, these "Beggars of the Sea," as they called themselves, soon made their power felt.

From the ocean was struck the first blow which strengthened the hands of the Prince of Orange. Its effects were not then appreciated; in fact, it seemed like a misfortune; but it contributed somewhat to force England into the controversy, and also to bring about the consolidation of the Catholics and Protestants at home which was essential to a successful revolution. Early in 1569, some privateers, holding commissions from the Prince of Condé, chased into the ports of England several merchantmen belonging to Spain, with eight hundred thousand dollars in specie, borrowed from Italian bankers for the payment of Alva's troops. Remaining outside, they blockaded the harbor so that the trading ships did not dare to put to sea. The Spanish ambassador complained to Queen Elizabeth, who promised speedy redress. She granted it by seizing on the money and appropriating it to herself as a loan from its Italian owners. This high-handed act, committed while the two nations were at peace, infuriated Alva. He issued a proclamation commanding the arrest of every Englishman in the Netherlands, and the seizure of all English property. Elizabeth retaliated by measures of the same character, to which Alva replied by forbidding all intercourse with England. Appeals were made to Philip in Spain, but it was four years before the controversy was finally arranged.*

Meantime, the Flemish manufacturers and merchants,

* Froude, ix. 371.

deprived of English wool and excluded from an English market, suffered greatly. Hostilities were now brought to their very doors. It was no longer a question of murdering a few thousand heretics, but one which affected directly their national prosperity. Upon England the effect was more marked, not only upon trade, but in other quarters. Elizabeth had no sympathy with the insurgents in the Netherlands, and had committed this act of spoliation simply in the spirit of a corsair queen, assuming that Spain was too much absorbed to make reprisals. She was right in thinking that Philip did not wish to add another enemy to his list, but neither he nor Alva ever quite forgave the outrage. With this event begin the plots for her dethronement and the substitution of her cousin, Mary Stuart. Shortly thereafter occurred the Catholic uprising in the northern counties, and the pope's bull of excommunication against Elizabeth.

While these results were working out across the Channel, Alva was not idle. He went on with his work as if possessed by the evil genius of Spain. Although the country was now at peace, no halt was called in the process of exterminating heresy. For some months, to be sure, a general pardon was promised; but when promulgated with a great parade, in the summer of 1570, the exceptions were found to be so numerous as to work its virtual cancellation. The fires still blazed around the stake, the scaffolds ran with blood, and the pits in which the victims were buried while alive multiplied on every side. And yet the rich mines to be opened by the Spaniards did not yield the promised treasure. Alva had been obliged largely to increase his army, which now numbered over sixty thousand; he had manned all the old fortresses and built new citadels,

until the country looked like a camp of Spain. All this was necessary to keep the insurgent elements under foot, but it took large sums of money, and, although the confiscations were numerous enough, the expenses left no profits. The promised stream of gold flowed in the wrong direction for the royal coffers, and the duke had enemies at court whose tongues were never idle.

Of Alva's military ability there can be no question; he was now to show himself the most incapable of statesmen and financiers. In Spain, and in his own dukedom, there existed a very simple method of taxation. All the land paid one per cent. annually on its value, and when sold it paid five per cent. This latter tax was heavy, but that on the sales of personal property was twice as large, being one tenth of the selling price. Among an agricultural people, where land was rarely sold, and where the only sales of personal property were those of the produce of the soil, this system had worked without resistance. The brilliant idea now occurred to the Spanish general that, applied to the Netherlands, it would solve his financial problem and enable him to realize his promised stream of gold.

When this proposition was submitted to the assemblies of the states, in 1569, it was greeted with an indignant protest. Such a tax was not only violative of all the ancient charters, but it would be ruinous to trade. Among a manufacturing community an article is sold many times before it reaches the hand of the consumer. A tax of ten per cent. on every sale would amount to a substantial confiscation. These and kindred arguments were urged upon the duke, but he remained inflexible. His only answer was that it worked well among his people. At length all the representatives gave way except those from Utrecht. That prov-

ince was adjudged to have forfeited all its privileges and was subjected to an enormous fine. The people, however, were so aroused, and so great a pressure was brought to bear upon the governor, that in consideration of a large sum of ready money he consented, for two years, from 1570, to suspend the operation of the law. The two years rolled around, long enough for the persecuted Protestants, but far too short for the men of business, who foresaw impending ruin. When the time was up, Alva announced that there should be no more postponements.

Here, at last, the crisis of the struggle had arrived. Religious persecution must of necessity affect comparatively few, unjust taxation touches every member of society. Men may differ about articles of faith and theories of government, but all alike feel the burden when the tax-gatherer appears. Hence, sagacious statesmen glove the hand which fills the public purse. Of this wise policy, Alva, whose hands were cased in mail, knew nothing. The great difficulty in bringing about an uprising in the Netherlands had arisen from the fact that the Protestants for a long time were in a minority, and were mostly made up of the poorer classes. It was an age, too, when military discipline was all-important for conflicts in the field. The fortresses and walled towns with which the land was studded were mostly garrisoned by Spanish troops, and could be taken only by a general concert of action among the citizens. This concert of action, which had hitherto been impossible, the last act of Alva was now to bring about.

In 1570, the Huguenot war in France had come to an end by the ill-fated peace which led to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. William of Orange had again retired to Germany. Ever watchful and untiring, he kept up a

constant communication with the Netherlands. There the work was going bravely on. The air was full of the electricity which precedes a storm. The discontent was universal, for the people foresaw the total destruction of their civil as well as their religious liberty. When the moment for action came, it developed a policy which America, two centuries later, followed in its resistance to the Stamp act. Rather than pay the tax of Alva, the people, by unanimous consent, suspended business. Every form of industry came to a sudden stand. Even the brewers refused to sell their beer, the bakers to make bread, or the hotel-keepers to furnish accommodations for their guests. Multitudes of workmen out of employment filled the streets; the Spanish soldiers went hungry because they could no longer purchase provisions. Alva, of course, was in a fury. Armed resistance he could meet, but how make an entire people resume their occupations? At length he hit upon a plan in consonance with his whole course of conduct. Of yielding he had no thought, but he would make a terrible example of some of these refractory shopkeepers.

Early in April, 1572, he sent one night for the public executioner. To him he gave an order to arrest at once eighteen of the leading tradesmen of Brussels, and early in the morning hang them each in his own doorway. The ropes and extempore scaffolds were prepared, but before the morning dawned Alva was awakened to hear of something more important than the sale of bread and meat. It was the outbreak on the sea-coast which laid the foundations of the Dutch Republic.

In the latter days of March, a fleet of twenty-four vessels, belonging to the Beggars of the Sea, was lying off the southern coast of England. It was commanded by Admiral William de la Marck, a descendant of the

Wild Boar of Ardennes, whom Scott has immortalized in one of his great novels. He was related by blood to Egmont, and, according to the old Batavian custom, had sworn to let his hair and beard grow until his country was free or his kinsman's death had been avenged. A savage, lawless, and licentious ruffian, he had inflicted great damage on the commerce of Spain, and in his warfare had not always spared the property of neutrals. At this time the controversy between Elizabeth and Philip, arising out of the seizure of the Italian money, was hastening to an amicable adjustment. Alva complained bitterly of the countenance given by the people of England to the Netherland cruisers, who made that country a base of operations. The queen was willing to avoid a cause of offence which brought no benefit to her. She therefore issued a peremptory order, forbidding any of her subjects longer to supply them with provisions. Thus, driven out of their last port of refuge, De la Marck and his companions took to sea and started for the coast of Holland. Entering the Meuse, they suddenly appeared before the town of Brill.

Brill, though well walled and fortified, chanced at that moment to be without a Spanish garrison, its troops having been just before transferred to Utrecht. The Beggars, learning this fact, boldly demanded the surrender of the town. They numbered only three or four hundred, at the most, but the fame of their exploits and the fear of the inhabitants magnified them into as many thousands. Assured of protection for private property, the magistrates surrendered without resistance, but, having no confidence in the promises of the corsairs, at once fled the place, with all the leading citizens. Had De la Marck been alone, the outcome would have justified their apprehensions. He had determined to plunder

the town and then consign it to the flames. Fortunately wiser counsels prevailed. One of the ships was commanded by William de Blois, Seigneur of Treslong, whose father had once been governor of Brill. His brother had been executed by Alva, and he himself almost cut to pieces in the disastrous campaign of 1568. He had since taken to the sea and become one of the most distinguished of the Beggars. More far-sighted than the admiral, he insisted that the town should be held for the Prince of Orange. The ferocious De la Marck finally consented, but paid off part of his debt to the Council of Blood by sacking the churches and hanging thirteen monks and priests.*

The news of this exploit reached Alva just as he was preparing to try his scheme for opening the shops of Brussels. The joy shown on every face revealed the gravity of the situation. The executions could wait, but here was something that required immediate action. Ten companies of veterans were at once sent from Utrecht to retake the town. They arrived before its walls, but the quick-witted defenders cut the dikes and, rowing through the water, set fire to some of the transport-ships. Hemmed in between the flood and flame, the Spaniards retired and Brill was free. Its inhabitants returned to their homes and took an oath of allegiance to William, Prince of Orange, as stadtholder for his majesty. Not yet had the people any idea of renouncing their allegiance; but, although they knew it not, the corner-stone of the republic was laid, and they had discovered the mode of warfare which was to make their liberties secure.

---

* Motley, ii. 350–355. Shortly after this event the bloody and intractable De la Marck was removed from office, deprived of his commission, and forced to leave the country. Motley, ii. 435, 475.

William of Orange was at first disconcerted when he heard of the bold enterprise of De la Marck and Treslong. He was preparing again to invade the Netherlands, but his arrangements were incomplete, and he did not believe that the people were ready for a general uprising. Under such circumstances, a piratical foray on a peaceful town might well work mischief. The prudence of Treslong prevented the danger in the latter direction, while the march of events was to show how easily the wisest man may be mistaken as to public sentiment.

For about four years William had been absent from the Netherlands. Although in constant correspondence with his friends at home, he could not realize the changes which had been worked since his last unfortunate campaign. But the men who, since the first arrival of the Spaniards, had been hoping against hope, finally had learned that Alva was not acting on his own responsibility. As for the Spanish commander himself, he never understood the people over whom he tyrannized. In the southern provinces, where his residence was fixed, he was surrounded by a mercurial race of Gallic descent, turbulent, seditious, loud of speech, and quick to anger. These men he considered dangerous, and to hold them in subjection he had built vast fortresses and filled them with his veterans. In the north, the people of Germanic blood were of a very different type. They were more quiet of speech and less demonstrative, actors rather than talkers; men who, under a calm demeanor, concealed a devotion to principle, a dogged determination, and an heroic courage which have never been surpassed. They were to prove themselves the Puritans of the Netherlands, and they deceived the Spanish soldier just as their kinsmen in England and America with cor-

responding qualities have deceived foolish men of the world from that day to this. Like all who have ever met the Puritans in battle, he changed his mind about their character. He began by calling them "men of butter," but found that they were men of iron. Before leaving the country he admitted their unexampled bravery, and declared that they were the same men whose portraits Cæsar and Tacitus had drawn. Well he might, for Spain was to discover to her sorrow that, like their Batavian ancestors, when other nations went to battle, they went to war.*

It was fortunate for the cause of the patriots that in the early days of the contest Alva had not understood these men. Regarding them as peaceful and phlegmatic, easily governed and not likely to be dangerous, he had placed few troops among them, and had left their fortresses with rather insufficient guards. He was finally to be undeceived. The capture of Brill was but the spark applied to a train of gunpowder. The important city of Flushing was the first to rise and overpower its small Spanish garrison. Soon following in its footsteps came nearly all the important cities of Holland, Zeeland, and the northern provinces. Naturally, there were bloodshed and disorder, acts of wild vengeance on the part of men with human passions who had suffered so terribly for many years; but in the main the revolution was a peaceful one.†

Unlike the outbreak of the iconoclasts, six years before, the uprising now was general, and it was marked by a feature of peculiar interest. Before this time, as we have seen in the last chapter, the suffrage had in

---

* Tacitus, "Germania," §§ 29, 30.

† See Froude, x. 393, etc., for some of its dark features.

most parts of the country been taken from the people at large, and lodged in the hands of a few persons, mainly among the wealthy classes. Now, in all the redeemed cities, new boards of magistrates were established, and they were elected by a popular vote. The republic was thus founded on the will of the people, although in time the old system was re-established. What kind of a people they were who founded the republic is shown by the oaths which they exacted from the magistrates. The new officials swore fidelity to the King of Spain, and to the Prince of Orange as his stadtholder; resistance to Alva, his tenth-paying tax, and the Inquisition; and "to support every man's freedom and the welfare of the country, to protect widows, orphans, and miserable persons, and to maintain justice and truth."* Thus the fiction of an allegiance to Philip was still maintained, but the Prince of Orange was everywhere regarded as the actual ruler of the country. From his military post in Germany he directed all movements with the zeal of a patriot and the skill of a statesman. One measure he always insisted on, and it forms the key-note of all his policy. Although the feeling against the Catholics was bitter, and it had been intensified by a partisan struggle in which the reformers had now become the victors, he proclaimed and enforced full religious toleration, requiring an oath from all officers and magistrates that they would "offer no let or hindrance to the Roman churches."

The year 1572 gave great promise for the cause of liberty. The larger part of the northern provinces had been freed from the yoke of Spain; recruits poured in for the army, and even volunteers began to come from

* Motley, ii. 367.

England.* From the South, too, came joyful tidings. Louis of Nassau, a younger brother of William of Orange, was, next to Coligny, the idol of the French Huguenots. Among them he numbered his friends by thousands. An earnest Christian and a Protestant, he was also a gallant, dashing soldier, of charming manners and address, beaming with sunshine, the mirror of knightly courtesy. Well was he called the Bayard of the Netherlands. He had also influence at court. France and Spain were ancient enemies. Henry II., who thirteen years before was plotting with Philip to crush out heresy in their respective kingdoms, had shortly thereafter met a sudden death. His son, Charles IX., was now upon the throne. He was a young man, just come of age, and was moved to lend secret aid to the insurgents. In May, Louis of Nassau, with a small force of Huguenots, captured, by a brilliant feat of arms, the city of Mons. Mons was the capital and principal town of Hainault, the southern province of the Netherlands. It was surrounded by lofty walls, contained a citadel of strength, and, lying near the frontier, could with French aid be made of great importance to the patriots. Swiftly following this success came the news that a Spanish fleet had been taken as it attempted to sail by Flushing.

A soldier less brave and less experienced than Alva might well have been crushed under the storm which thus pelted him from every quarter. For a time even he knew not where to turn, but the news from Mons

---

* Two hundred English volunteers went to Flushing under Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Thomas Morgan. Meteren, book iv.; Davies's "Holland," i. 584. Froude says five hundred at first, and more in a second detachment. Froude, x. 379.

decided his course of action. That city must be retaken, and for the purpose he despatched his son, Don Frederick, with a force of veterans. Meantime, the fact that he had made a mistake in his financial policy was forced upon him. Reluctantly moved to the admission, on the 24th of June he summoned the Estates of Holland to meet at The Hague on the 15th of the ensuing month, promising then to abolish the obnoxious tax.

The concession came too late. The contest had now changed its character. The assembly met, not at The Hague and not on his call, but at Dort and on the call of the Prince of Orange, who was still in Germany engaged in raising an army. He needed trained soldiers to meet the veterans of Spain, and such soldiers could be hired in plenty, but they demanded a guarantee of pay. This the assembled congress of Holland agreed to furnish, giving the obligations of some of the cities to pay the army for three months. The arrangement was satisfactory, and on the 27th of August William of Orange began his march at the head of twenty-four thousand men. He directed his course towards Mons for the relief of his brother Louis. That adventurous soldier was now in dire peril. The little force with which he had surprised the city was inadequate to hold it against Don Frederick and his besieging army. Some Huguenot troops, who had been sent to his relief, were foolishly entrapped and utterly destroyed. Still, the approaching army gave promise of speedy succor.

As the Prince of Orange marched along, city after city of the South opened its gates and hailed him as a savior. Some refused admission, but on the whole the patriotic feeling appeared almost as widespread as in the northern provinces. The dawn of liberty seemed breaking into a noonday blaze. Nothing except a con-

vulsion of nature could now long postpone the hour of deliverance from the tyranny of Spain. Suddenly, as if from a cloudless sky, came the bolt which was to shatter all these hopes. Through the terror-stricken air flew the tidings that the Huguenots had been massacred in France. To appreciate what this meant to the patriots of the Netherlands, we must recall their situation.

They were fighting the mistress of a third of the known globe. They themselves were almost unused to arms. Germany had at one time seemed friendly, but its emperor was now allied by marriage to Philip, and denounced the revolution. Elizabeth of England had made her peace with Spain, cared nothing for the cause, and, as we shall soon see, could not be counted on for aid. To France alone the reformers looked for assistance. There they could count as friends a large body of influential Protestants, headed by Coligny, himself a tower of strength. He had acquired a great influence over the feeble-minded youthful Charles, who was at length persuaded that it was to his interest to curb the growing power of Spain. The religious war which had been waged for years was at an end. A marriage had been arranged between Henry of Navarre and the sister of the king. Most of the leading Huguenots assembled at Paris to witness the ceremony which was to consolidate a lasting peace between the factions, and give France her true position as the arbiter of Europe. Her open support, it was well known, would then be given to the rebellious Netherlanders. Well might they feel assurance of success.

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which wrought destruction to their hopes, was not a premeditated crime. It was the result of a sudden impulse on the part of

Catherine de' Medici, the mother of the king. She was jealous of the ascendency which Coligny had acquired over the mind of her son, and plotted his destruction. But her jealousy had a basis much deeper, and one much more creditable to her character than any feeling of mere personal pique.

With all her moral defects, Catherine was a woman of ability. She cared nothing for religious questions, but did care for what she regarded as the interest of France. To her the extreme Catholics and the extreme Protestants were equally objectionable, for each threatened the peace and greatness of the kingdom. The time had now come, however, when she thought it wise to side with the latter against Philip and the papacy. But such action was impracticable without the aid of some foreign power. She had therefore proposed that England should join the Huguenots of France, and sustain the struggling Protestants of the Netherlands. To this coalition Elizabeth was urged by her ministers, and Catherine was led to believe that the scheme would be carried out. It was in this belief that, setting the pope at defiance, she had consented to the marriage of her daughter to a Protestant, and to the raising of the army which was to march under Coligny to the assistance of the Prince of Orange.

At the last moment came the intelligence that not only was Elizabeth playing with the question of a French alliance, but that she was secretly plotting with Philip and Alva to gain for herself some personal advantage from the situation. Thus bereft of her only Protestant ally, Catherine naturally sided with the stronger party. The Huguenots still demanded the war with Spain and the papacy; but such a war, in a country where the Catholics formed the large majority of the population,

could bring only ruin to France. Under these circumstances, the conduct of Catherine, although worthy of all the execration which it has received, is not one of the mysteries of history. Coligny guided the counsels of the king, and was urging him on a course which she thought disastrous to the nation. He therefore must be removed.*

First, an assassin shot at the aged admiral, but only inflicted a severe wound. At once, his outraged friends demanded the detection and punishment of those who stood behind the would-be murderer. Catherine and her adherents were alarmed at the cry for vengeance, and instantly resolved to secure their safety by exterminating the whole brood of heretics. The scheme was after a brief delay put in execution, the delay being caused by the reluctance of the king to kill his old friend, and the best man among his subjects. His mother, however, answered such scruples by portraying the danger to herself, the peril to the throne from a general uprising of the Huguenots, and finally by taunting him with want of courage. When committed to the plot, Charles hurried on with feverish haste. As ferocious as he was imbecile and cowardly, he demanded that the deed should be done at once, and that none of the proscribed religion should be left in France to reproach him for the crime. How rapidly and how thoroughly the work was done, the world knows by heart.

The Catholic powers of Europe hailed the news with joy. The pope ordered a Te Deum to be sung in honor of the victory over the enemies of Rome. In Spain, the saturnine Philip laughed as he had never laughed before. England, on the other hand, felt a

* Froude, x. 382–396.

thrill of horror. The queen, but for whose duplicity there would probably have been no massacre, went into mourning with her whole court, refused for a time to see the envoy of France, and, when an audience was granted, listened to his explanations in total silence. Still, such expressions of cheap sympathy were followed by no action. The Netherlanders now stood without a friend. This stupendous, insensate crime had driven their only ally into the arms of Spain. Indeed, it seemed that the French ambassador, when congratulating Philip, had told the truth in saying that to his royal master's work on St. Bartholomew's Day he owed the preservation of the Netherlands.

The Prince of Orange was met by the overwhelming tidings while on his march to Mons. He knew at once that all was over in the South. The Duke of Alva had joined Don Frederick with the flower of his army. They were strongly intrenched about the beleaguered city, holding a position which could not be taken by assault. All attempts to draw them into an engagement were unsuccessful, for Alva was too prudent a general to risk a victory which a little time would give him without a battle. The delay was brief, for the hired mercenaries, knowing that France would send no further reinforcements, and doubtful of their future pay, refused to march. Sadly enough the few remaining patriots retraced their steps across the Rhine. The army was disbanded; Mons surrendered; the Belgic cities returned to their allegiance, Mechlin being sacked with indescribable atrocity as an example to future rebels; and all save hope seemed lost.

The miracle had been wrought which alone appeared capable of defeating the cause of the reformers. When William of Orange was on his march with an army large

and well equipped, with France and England as prospective allies, with cities opening their gates, and the people about him tumultuous with joy, it looked as if the last chapter in the history of the contest had been opened, and that we might prepare to close the book. In fact, the struggle had just begun which was to last for nearly eighty years, to be illuminated with deeds of valor such as have never been surpassed, making up a tale of Puritan constancy and virtue which will forever serve as a beacon light to the oppressed of every age and clime.

Upon the disbandment of his army the Prince of Orange betook his way, almost alone, to Holland. It was about the only remaining faithful province, and was to prove more faithful than even he had dreamed of. Man, he thought, had deserted him; but while in exile he had learned to place his trust in another Power whose steadfastness he never subsequently doubted. Writing four years before, in a private letter to his wife, he said: "I have resolved to place myself in the hands of the Almighty, that he may guide me whither it is His good pleasure that I should go. I see well enough that I am destined to pass this life in misery and labor, with which I am well content since it thus pleases the Omnipotent, for I know that I have merited still greater chastisement. I only implore him graciously to send me strength to endure with patience." * This was the key-note of the Puritanism which was to rejuvenate the world. It was the confidence in an all-wise overruling Providence that led to the triumph of the Dutch Republic, nerved the arms of the Ironsides who fought with Cromwell, kept up the hopes of Washington, and inspired the heart of a

* Motley, ii. 246.

Lincoln and a Grant. To him who does not appreciate this element history is of little value.

It is not my intention to describe with any detail the long ensuing war with Spain, in which Holland was to take the leading part. The important subjects for the purposes of this work relate to the institutions of the people, their progress in civilization, the national character developed by the struggle, and the mode in which their Puritanism came to affect their neighbors across the Channel, and, later on, the settlers in America. The comprehension of these questions required something of an extended review of the causes of the conflict, and this must now be supplemented by at least a sketch of its subsequent progress, showing how it developed into a religious struggle, and then into a war for independence. In this sketch the reader will find, as he has found in the preceding pages, a re-statement of some incidents which other writers have made familiar. But however familiar such incidents may be, they take on an interest entirely new when we come to realize that here was the influence which shaped the character of the English Puritans; this conflict serving for them as a perpetual object-lesson, showing what they might expect from the assertion of absolute power in the State and the re-establishment of the Romish Church. Certain it is that unless one keeps this story in mind the subsequent history of England and America is inexplicable.

After the surrender of Mons, Holland was almost deserted by her associate provinces. But although standing substantially alone, her people were firmly resolved that the Inquisition and the illegal taxation with which they had at length done away should never be reinstated. Fortunately, her geographical situation gave her some important advantages in the coming contest. Within

her borders were numerous walled towns, each a miniature republic, with its civic guard and train-bands, which Americans would call militia. Most of these towns were located on some arm of the sea or navigable river, so that their commerce could with difficulty be impeded. Here the people lived, carrying on their ordinary vocations as fishermen, manufacturers, and merchants; such places as were not captured growing rapidly in wealth and population. As a rule, they were below the level of the water and protected from its ravages by extensive dikes, behind which spread cultivated fields and fertile pastures. It was evident that in the open country the insurgents could make no stand against the disciplined troops of Spain. Even that triumph, however, was to come at a later day when they met and defeated them, man to man. Now, in the early stages of the contest, the sole object of either party was to gain possession of the walled towns which the other held.

To illustrate the character of this warfare, and the heroism displayed by the patriots, a few incidents, showing some of its different phases, will serve a better purpose than pages of description.

In Holland, at the close of 1572, Amsterdam was the only city held by Alva. From this point as a base, he set out to conquer the remainder of the province. The Prince of Orange was in the southern portion, and his lieutenant in the northern district. Between them on a narrow strip of land, but five miles wide, lay the city of Harlem, large and beautiful, but with a small garrison and works of little strength. It was only ten miles from Amsterdam, and Alva regarded it as the key to the situation. Its capture, he thought, would be an easy matter. About its walls Don Frederick encamped, in December, with an army of thirty thousand veterans. Preceding

the siege occurred one of the events which add a touch of picturesqueness to this extraordinary war.

The weather being cold, a few armed vessels belonging to Holland became frozen in the ice. Don Frederick, taking advantage of this accident, despatched a small picked force to capture them. Suddenly, as the Spaniards went slipping and sliding on their way, there appeared before them a skating-party fully armed. A lively skirmish ensued, in which the men from the South were as helpless as were the clumsy galleons of the Invincible Armada before the nimble privateers of Drake and Frobisher. At its conclusion the Hollanders skated off, leaving several hundred of the enemy dead upon the ice. Such a form of warfare was novel to Alva, but he was not to be outdone. At once he ordered seven thousand pairs of skates, and his soldiers soon became proficient in their use.

This little incident gave a gleam of encouragement to the burghers of Harlem, but their situation was hopeless from the first. Without, was an army of thirty thousand men, and within, a garrison of only four thousand. But although Alva expected to take the place in a week, its siege lasted for seven long months. On both sides prodigies of valor were performed. Three hundred women, led by a widow of a distinguished family, organized a corps of Amazons, and fought like trained soldiers in the ranks. When assaults were attempted, the besieged poured boiling oil and blazing pitch on the heads of the assailants. Men, women, and children worked to repair the breaches in the wall. In one attack upon the city three or four hundred Spaniards were slain, and only three or four of the defenders. Finding that assaults were useless, the enemy began to mine the walls, and were met by countermines. In the darkness, under the

earth, fierce and bloody conflicts ensued. "These citizens," wrote Don Frederick, "do as much as the bravest soldiers in the world could do." At one time he despaired of taking the place, and sent a messenger to his father, asking permission to withdraw. "Tell Don Frederick," said Alva, "that if he be not decided to continue the siege till the town be taken, I shall no longer consider him my son, whatever my opinion may formerly have been. Should he fall in the siege, I will myself take the field to maintain it; and when we have both perished, the duchess, my wife, shall come from Spain to do the same."

Meantime the Prince of Orange was using every effort to relieve the city, but all was useless against the number and discipline of the besiegers. In one of these attempts, a single Hollander, John Haring, of Horn, planted on a narrow dike, with sword and shield kept a thousand Spaniards at bay until his comrades had effected a retreat. Then, like Horatius of old, he plunged into the water and made his own escape.

Thus the winter and spring rolled on. In March, a thousand of the garrison made a sally from the walls, and, with a loss of but four of their party, killed eight hundred of the enemy, burned three hundred tents, and captured seven cannons, nine standards, and many wagon-loads of provisions. Such feats as this led Alva to write to Philip that "it was a war such as never before was seen or heard of in any land on earth," and that "never was a place defended with such skill and bravery as Harlem, either by rebels or by men fighting for their lawful prince."* Still there was one enemy against whom skill and bravery are powerless. By June, gaunt

* Motley, ii. 444.

famine appeared within the gates. Even he was baffled long. When the ordinary food had been consumed, the people lived on linseed and rapeseed from which they had been making oil; then on dogs, cats, rats, and mice; next they boiled the hides of oxen and horses, then devoured their boots and shoes, and finally tore up the nettles from the graveyards and the grass from between the stones.

By the middle of July famine had conquered. Every vestige of food was gone, and the heroic defenders of the doomed city resolved to die together. Forming all the women, children, sick, and aged, into a square, and surrounding them with the able-bodied men, they were determined to fight their way out, and dearly sell their lives. Learning of this resolve, and knowing that it would be put in execution, Don Frederick offered handsome terms for an immediate surrender. A letter was sent, by his order, promising ample forgiveness to the town, and that no one should be punished except such as the citizens themselves thought worthy of it. No intention existed of observing these conditions, but the people, for the last time, put their trust in Spanish honor. They were to learn that it was a cardinal principle of Philip and his adherents to keep no faith with heretics. The garrison had been reduced during the siege to eighteen hundred men, of whom six hundred were Germans. These were spared, and sent home on parole. The rest, some of whom were English volunteers, with eleven hundred of the citizens, were butchered in cold blood on the day after the surrender. Five executioners were detailed for the bloody work; when they gave out, the victims were bound back to back and hurled into the lake.* This restricted slaughter was regarded

* Motley, ii. 454.

by Alva as proving the natural humanity of his gentle disposition. It was, in fact, mildness itself as compared with the fell work wrought by his commands in other places. When Zutphen was taken by assault and Naarden by capitulation, every woman was violated, and then almost every human being murdered, the towns being left a waste.

Such was the nature of the life-and-death struggle upon which the Hollanders had entered. With the surrender of Harlem, their fortunes seemed to have reached a very low ebb, but they never for an instant thought of wavering. Alva long before had offered to abandon his odious tax. He now proclaimed a general pardon for the past if the insurgents would return to their allegiance. All his overtures were met with silence. In fact, the outlook, if dark for Holland, was not promising for Spain. Twelve thousand of her bravest soldiers lay buried before the walls of Harlem. Seven months had been consumed in taking a single city, and that one of the weakest in the province. Such a people could not be conquered, and to exterminate them at this rate would make Spain a desolation. The only question was whether, in such a mode of warfare, the besieged or the besiegers would first lose heart. This was speedily determined.

In August, 1573, Don Frederick, with sixteen thousand men, set out to take the town of Alkmaar, in the north of Holland. The place was a small one, containing only eight hundred soldiers and thirteen hundred able-bodied burghers. This, again, was to be an easy capture, and Alva proclaimed that as clemency in the case of Harlem had proved a failure, he now would not leave a human being alive. An investment was begun, so perfect that it was declared not even a sparrow could enter or leave the city. In September, all preparations being

completed and the works having been sufficiently bombarded, a general assault was ordered. Certainly these sixteen thousand trained veterans could overwhelm this puny garrison. Again, as in Harlem, the men, women, and children fought with stones, boiling oil, burning pitch, and molten lead. Hoops dipped in tar and set on fire were thrown around the necks of the assailants, while those who mounted the breaches were met with sword and dagger. A Spanish officer, who was hurled from the battlements, reported that he had seen "neither helmet nor cuirass" as he looked down into the city, "only some plain-looking people, generally dressed like fishermen." When the recall was sounded, a thousand veterans lay dead in the trenches, while the "fishermen" had lost but thirty-seven.*

The next day Don Frederick ordered the assault to be renewed, but the end had come. His invincible legions refused to move; men they would fight, but not these devils. Entreaties were tried, and several of the soldiers were run through the bodies by their officers; but all in vain. They would not brave again the old Batavian spirit before which Rome itself had quailed. The siege dragged on for another month, during which time the people of the surrounding country had resolved to cut the dikes and overflow the district. The sacrifice was enormous, for it involved the destruction of a vast amount of property; but the point had been reached where a drowned land was regarded as a lesser evil than the Spanish rule. The work was accordingly begun, but as the water rose Don Frederick, too, abandoned heart and hastily retreated. Alkmaar, like Brill, had been saved by fire and flood.

* Motley, ii. 468.

Alva had now been six years in the country pursuing his policy of repression. He had boasted that he would crush out heresy and rebellion, and make the war pay its own expenses with a handsome profit. At the close of the six years the Prince of Orange had become a Calvinist, and almost all the people of Holland and Zeeland professing Protestants; the rebellion had grown into a war, and Alva's treasury was bankrupt. For months the baffled and disappointed governor-general had petitioned for his recall. Even he could not stand the universal execrations of a nation. Finally, in December, 1573, his prayer was granted and he left for home, boasting, as it was said, that, exclusive of those who fell in battle, siege, and massacre, he had executed eighteen thousand six hundred heretics and traitors. His parting advice to Philip was, that every city in the Netherlands should be burned to the ground, except a few which could be occupied permanently by the royal troops.*

Alva was succeeded by Don Louis de Requesens, Grand Commander of Castile, and late Governor of Milan. As he had a reputation for sagacity and moderation, his advent was looked upon as an omen of better things. All parties wished for peace, particularly the inhabitants of the Catholic subject provinces, who saw their prosperity rapidly passing away. Requesens professed a desire for a pacific policy, but he was only a puppet in the hands of his royal master, who demanded absolute subjection to the Church of Rome. As this was now the only point in controversy, all overtures were useless. Fortunately

---

* That Alva had not lost his martial skill was shown seven years after his return to Spain. He then commanded an army which conquered the whole of Portugal in fifty-four days, less than one third of the time consumed in taking Harlem.

for the patriots, the finances of the Spaniards were in a bad condition. Taxation was at an end, for even the states not in insurrection made but small contributions to the expenses of the war. The army consisted of over sixty thousand men, all to be supported from Spain, and Philip had large enterprises in other quarters which always kept him poor. With a bankrupt treasury, and his soldiers in frequent mutiny for their pay, now three years overdue, Requesens found his position a bed of thorns.

Still the war continued. On the sea the patriots were almost uniformly victorious. There they were at home. In February, 1574, they showed that they had turned the tables on land, by taking Middelburg after a brilliant siege. This gave them the key to the commerce of the Scheldt and the command of Zeeland. In the summer of the same year occurred one of the most important events of the war. It was only the attempt to take a city, but that attempt led to the foundation of the famous University of Leyden, which was to serve so largely during the next few years in making Holland the learned country of the world.

The city of Leyden was situated in Middle Holland, a short distance south of Harlem. It was fifteen miles from the river Meuse, on a broad and beautiful plain which was intersected by a number of the branches into which the Rhine was divided, as in its weakness it crawled towards the sea. Within the town were broad streets, spacious squares, imposing churches and public edifices, with some one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone, spanning the canals which interlaced the city. In the centre, on an artificial eminence, rose an antique tower, probably of Roman origin, but popularly ascribed to the Anglo-Saxon Hengist,

who was said to have built it to commemorate his conquest of Britain.

When, in October, 1573, the Spanish forces retired from Alkmaar, they sat down before Leyden and began its siege. In March, they were called away to resist Louis of Nassau, who had finally raised another army, and again invaded the Netherlands from the East. An engagement ensued in April, which was followed by the usual result; the patriots being utterly cut to pieces. Among the dead were Louis and his younger brother. William of Orange had now lost three of his four brothers, and though John remained, a gallant, faithful soldier and a zealous Calvinist, no one could take the place in diplomacy and war of the Bayard of the Netherlands. William stood thenceforth almost alone among the nobles.

In May, 1574, the Spaniards returned to Leyden, and opened the siege anew. They numbered some eight thousand at first, and received daily reinforcements. Within the city were no soldiers at all, except a small corps of freebooters and five companies of the burgher guard. Yet the besiegers made no attempt to carry the place by storm. Alkmaar had taught them a lesson which they did not soon forget. They now relied solely on famine, which had gained them Harlem, and here the chances seemed greatly in their favor. The town was known to be insufficiently provisioned, while the besieging force was so great that there was no chance of relieving it from without by any ordinary means. As for flooding the country, though it was all below the water-level, that seemed impossible. The main dikes were fifteen miles away, and between them and the city were a number of subordinate ones, each sufficient to keep out the watery foe. The latter were

guarded from attack by no less than sixty-two forts and redoubts which, held by the Spaniards, seemed to make them safe. Despite all this, the Prince of Orange sent word to the inhabitants that if they would hold out for three months he would find means for their deliverance, and they believed him.

In June, Requesens, by order of the king, issued a proclamation of general amnesty, over which he had been pondering long. It promised full forgiveness for the past to every one, except a few individuals specified by name, on the sole condition that they would return to the bosom of Mother Church. But two persons in the whole country took advantage of this act of grace —one a brewer in Utrecht, the other a son of a refugee peddler from Leyden. This should answer the question as to the character of the war. The taxation of Alva was but the spark by which the flame was kindled. It was devotion to religious liberty that supplied the fuel.

In July, the Prince of Orange began to cut the outer dikes, believing that the flood of water then admitted would prove sufficient to drive out the Spaniards. Here, however, his calculations were at fault. The water entered, but the inner barriers stood firm. Then he organized a flotilla, which, manned by the wild Beggars of the Sea, followed the advancing waves and attacked the remaining dikes one by one. This was a work of time and difficulty, for the Spaniards were in overwhelming numbers and made a stout resistance. Still, little by little an advance was made.*

* It is a curious fact that in this flotilla there was a vessel designed by the inventive Hollanders which was the forerunner of our modern iron-clads. It was a floating structure of great size, called

Meantime, as the slow work went on, the unhappy inhabitants of the city were reduced to dreadful straits. The three months which were to bring relief had stretched to four. For two, they said, they had lived on food, but during the other two without it. Every green thing within the walls was consumed; infants starved to death on the bosoms of their famished mothers; the watchmen, as they went about the streets, found many a house untenanted, except by withered corpses.

Finally came the plague to add its horrors to starvation, and six or eight thousand victims fell before its breath. Day by day the heroic survivors clambered up the Tower of Hengist to watch and pray. For weeks the wind had been blowing from the east, and unless it changed relief was hopeless. Nothing but a strong gale from the ocean, even after all the dikes were cut, would heap up the waters so as to flood the country. Still, although a full pardon was freely offered them, there was little thought of surrender. To the taunts of the foe without, this response was made: "Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters, and it is true. So long, then as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but ourselves, be sure that we will devour our left arms, retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion, against the foreign tyrant. Should God in his wrath doom us to destruction, and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves forever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city, and perish, men, women, and children, together in the

---

the "Ark of Delft," covered with shot-proof bulwarks, and propelled by paddle-wheels moved by a crank. Motley, ii. 567.

flames rather than suffer our homes to be polluted and our liberties to be crushed."* What could Spain do against such a people?

At length deliverance came. On the 1st of October the wind shifted to the west; on the 3d, the Spaniards had fled before the flood, the fleet was at the walls, and Leyden was relieved.

The first act of this half-starved people tells much of the story of their lives. Forming at once in solemn procession, they marched to the church, and on bended knee gave thanks to the Almighty God, whose wisdom they had never doubted. When, however, they attempted to close the service with a hymn, the strain upon them was too great; as the grand chorus swelled, the multitude wept like children. These were the men who, thirty-five years later, gave a home to the Pilgrim Fathers. What lessons of fortitude and devotion the English exiles must have learned as they walked about a city sacred to the cause of religion, liberty, and learning!

The next act of this God-fearing community tells the rest of their story. To commemorate the siege, and as a reward for the heroism of the citizens, the Prince of Orange, with the consent of the Estates of the province, founded the University of Leyden. Still, the figment of allegiance remained; the people were only fighting for their constitutional rights, and so were doing their duty to the sovereign. Hence the charter of the university ran in the name of Philip, who was credited with its foundation, as a reward to his subjects for their rebellion against his evil counsellors and servants, "especially in consideration of the differences in religion,

* Motley, ii. 571.

and the great burdens and hardships borne by the citizens of our city of Leyden during the war with such faithfulness." Motley calls this "ponderous irony," but the Hollanders were able lawyers and intended to build on a legal basis.

This event marks an epoch in the intellectual history of Holland and of the world. We have already seen something of her classical schools, which contributed so much to the growth of the Reformation, and of the general education which reached down even to the peasantry. Still, she had no prominent institutions for a higher culture. Before the war they were not necessary, for the University of Louvain, in Brabant, was very near, while the sons of the wealthy who desired better advantages could find them in Paris or Italy. Now all that was changed. When Alva arrived in the Netherlands, the oldest son of the Prince of Orange was a student at Louvain. No one thought that the Spaniards would make war upon children, any more than upon women, but this was a mistake. The boy was carried to Spain and kept a prisoner for twenty years. The Hollanders now resolved that such a misfortune should not occur again, but that their young men should have the opportunity for the highest education within the guarded precincts of their own walled towns.

The new university was opened in 1575, and from the outset took the highest rank. Speaking, a few years ago, of its famous senate chamber, Niebuhr called it "the most memorable room of Europe in the history of learning." The first curator was John Van der Does, who had been military commandant of the city during the siege. He was of a distinguished family, but was still more distinguished for his learning, his poetical genius,

and his valor.* Endowed with ample funds, the university largely owed its marked pre-eminence to the intelligent foresight and wise munificence of its curators. They sought out and obtained the most distinguished scholars of all nations, and to this end spared neither pains nor expense. Diplomatic negotiation and even princely mediation were often called in for the acquisition of a professor. Hence it was said that it surpassed all the universities of Europe in the number of its scholars of renown.

These scholars were treated with princely honors. When Scaliger came from France, in 1593, he was conveyed in a ship-of-war sent for the special purpose. His successor, Salmasius, also a Frenchman, upon visiting his native land, went in a frigate, escorted by the whole Dutch fleet to Dieppe. When he visited Sweden and Denmark, royal escorts accompanied him from the borders of one country to another.† The "mechanicals" of

---

* Davies's "Holland," ii. 15; Motley, ii. 553.

† See article on "Leiden University," by Prof. W. T. Hewett, of Cornell University, in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1881, to which I am much indebted. Prof. Hewett, himself a student at this famous university, in common with every intelligent observer who has lived in Holland, was much struck with the similarity between the Dutch and the American modes of thought. He says: "The Dutch mind is more like the American in its method of thought than is that of any other nation of the Continent. There is the same intensity of feeling on all religious questions, the same keen, practical genius An invisible line separates Holland from Germany. The purpose of the Hollander is direct. The Hollander understands America and republican institutions, and their true foundations in the intelligence and self-control of the people. I always felt sure of being understood when speaking with an educated Hollander, whether discussing Church and State or our current political questions. He could rightly estimate the real and unreal dangers which attend demo-

Holland, as Elizabeth called them, may not have paid the accustomed worship to rank, but to genius and learning they were always willing to do homage.

Space would fail for even a brief account of the great men, foreign and native, who illuminated Leyden with their presence. I have spoken of the younger Scaliger, the professor of belles-lettres, whom Hallam calls "the most extraordinary master of general erudition that ever lived," and of whom Niebuhr says: "Scaliger stood on the topmost point of linguistic learning, and so high in science of all kinds that he was able of himself to acquire, use, and judge all therein." Of his successor Salmasius it was said "that what he did not know was beyond the bounds of human knowledge." * Hugo Grotius, when a boy of eleven, came to study at Leyden. At seventeen, Henry IV. of France presented him to his sister at Versailles, with the words, "Behold the miracle of Holland." Later on, Grotius became famous as a jurist, diplomatist, theologian, philologist, and historian, while in international law he stands not only as the founder, but as still the acknowledged head.†

In a shaded retreat near the city, later on, dwelt Des-

---

cratic governments, as our English cousins are not always in the habit of doing."

* These expressions seem extravagant, but the acquisitions of the scholars of that day were as phenomenal as the achievements of men like Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and others, who were sculptors, painters, architects, engineers, poets, and musicians, all at the same time, and pre-eminent in each department. The range of knowledge was, of course, much narrower than at present, and perhaps bodies and brains were more robust.

† "It is acknowledged by every one that the publication of this treatise—on the Law of War and Peace—made an epoch in the philosophical, and almost we might say in the political, history of Europe."—Hallam's "Literature of Europe," iii. 223.

cartes, the "founder of the modern mechanical philosophy," who was discovered by the Hollanders;* and subsequently Spinoza, a Jew of Amsterdam, the most perfect character and the greatest philosopher, as many think, of modern times. The famous Justus Lipsius filled the chair of history in the university. John Drusius, for whom Oxford and Cambridge contended as an Orientalist, was for years in its faculty; Gomar and Arminius, names familiar to every theologian, taught theology; the celebrated geographer Cluverius, who spoke ten languages, and whose geography went through twenty-six editions, was one of the professors; among others was Peter Paaw, who founded the botanical garden of Leyden, and whose treatises on physics, anatomy, and botany still maintain their place in the best libraries.† When it was finally determined that France was to become Catholic, the seat of learning was transferred from Paris to Leyden. Then began the first scientific study of Greek, under Hemsterhuys. Under Boerhaave, Albinus, and Sylvius, its medical school became the most famous in Europe.‡

These were among the men whose influence made Holland through the seventeenth century the peculiarly learned, as it was pre-eminently the literary, country of

---

* Whewell. Descartes was also "the genuine author of the mechanical theory of the rainbow."—Idem.

† "Three Centuries of Congregationalism," Dexter, p. 384.

‡ Boerhaave was perhaps the most celebrated physician that ever lived, if we except Hippocrates. Thompson's "History of Chemistry," i. 209. He was great as a botanist and chemist as well as a physician. The Czar Peter once waited two hours for an interview with him. A Chinese mandarin addressed a letter "To the illustrious Boerhaave, physician in Europe," which duly reached its destination.

Europe at the beginning of the century and for many years afterwards.* In 1586, a century before the appearance of Newton's "Principia," Stevinus, engineer to Prince Maurice, and inspector of the dikes of Holland, published his "Principles of Equilibrium," which founded the science of statics.† He also introduced the use of decimal fractions, and predicted the adoption of a decimal coinage, weights, and measures.‡ In 1609, Holland gave to the world the telescope, which made a new science of astronomy.§

By the invention of the microscope, which was also made in Holland prior to 1620,‖ the science of the infinitely large was supplemented by that of the infinitely small. In 1630, Cornelius Drebbel, a Hollander, who exhibited the first microscope in England, invented the thermometer, by which for the first time variations of temperature were accurately measured. Leeuwenhoeck, to whom modern authorities give the honor of inventing

---

* See Hallam's "Literature of Europe," iii. 279; iv. 59.

† "The formation of the science of statics was finished; the mathematical development and exposition of it were alone open to extension and change." "By the discoveries of Stevinus all problems of equilibrium were substantially solved."—Whewell, "History of the Inductive Sciences," i. 351; ii. 15, 16, 40, 68.

‡ "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Stevinus."

§ "The real inventor of the telescope is not certainly known. Metius of Alkmaar long enjoyed the honor, but the best claim seems to be that of Zachary Jens or Jansens, a dealer in spectacles at Middelburg. The date of the invention, or at least of its publicity, is referred beyond dispute to 1609. The news spread rapidly through Europe, reaching Galileo, who, in the same year, constructed by his own sagacity the instrument which he exhibited at Venice."—Hallam, iv. 27. Motley says that Jansens invented both the telescope and microscope in 1590. "United Netherlands," iv. 570.

‖ Hallam, iv. 27.

the microscope, which Drebbel exhibited,* was the first of biologists to discover the capillary circulation of the blood. Snellius, mathematical professor at Leyden, introduced the true method of measuring the degrees of latitude and longitude.† In 1656, Christian Huyghens, also of Holland, invented the pendulum clock. "This," says Whewell, "was the beginning of anything which we can call accuracy in time." He also first applied the micrometer to the telescope, and was the author of the undulatory theory of light, which Newton opposed.‡ With these instruments, invented by the Hollanders, almost the whole field of science was opened up to the inquirer.§

But it was not alone in scholarship and in scientific research that the University of Leyden gave an impetus to modern thought. Theological disputes were developed there at times, little tempests which threatened destruction to the institution, but they were of short

---

* See "Encyclopædia Britannica," article "Microscope."

† Motley's "United Netherlands," iv. 571.

‡ Whewell, ii. 267, 269, 392.

§ In 1630, Varenius, a physician of Amsterdam, who had studied at Leyden, gave to the world his great work on physical geography. Sir Isaac Newton used it as a text-book, caused it to be translated into English, and it retained its place as the leading authority for a century and a half. It is interesting to notice that Varenius advocated the construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Suez, holding, two centuries before De Lesseps, that there was no inequality of level between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean which would render it impracticable. See "Annual Address before the American Geographical Society," by Charles P. Daly, Jan. 14th, 1890, pp. 44–52. Leyden was almost the only place upon the Continent where Newton's great discovery was accepted and taught, until it was popularized by Voltaire in 1728. Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," i. 65.

duration. The right of conscience was always respected, and in the main the right of full and public discussion. According to Hallam,* it was from Leyden, perhaps a little from Racow, that the "immortal Chillingworth" and the "ever-memorable John Hales" borrowed "a tone of thinking upon some doctrinal points as yet nearly unknown, and therefore highly obnoxious in England." The tolerance of Leyden, however, like its learning and science, took root in England very slowly, for these two remarkable lights of the Church, "who dwelt apart like stars," did not appear upon the horizon until the reign of Charles I.; but the liberality and tolerance which they proclaimed have in the end borne abundant fruit.† When it was settled that dissenters could not be educated in the English universities, they flocked to Leyden in great numbers, making that city, next to Edinburgh, their chief resort.‡

Eleven years after the opening of the University of Leyden, the Estates of democratic Friesland, amid the din of war, founded the University of Franeker, an institution which, considering the poverty and isolation of Friesland, was as remarkable in its establishment as

* "Const. Hist.," ii. 79.

† Chillingworth advocated "the independency of private opinion." "This endeavor to mitigate the dread of forming mistaken judgments in religion runs through the whole work of Chillingworth, and marks him as the founder, in this country, of what has been called the latitudinarian school of theology."—Hallam, ii. 78. Hales was "even more hardy than his friend," p. 79.

‡ In the eighteenth century nearly two thousand British students were educated at Leyden. Steven, "Hist. of the Scottish Church at Rotterdam," p. 266. Among these students was the famous John Wilkes, who, with all his excesses, contributed so much to the cause of English liberty. Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," iii. 78.

its predecessor in the wealthier state of Holland. As at Leyden, the instruction was substantially free, for the professors were paid handsome salaries from an endowment by the State. In addition, provision was made for boarding the poorer scholars, so that they could obtain a full collegiate education at an annual expense of from fifteen to twenty-five dollars. The pupils were instructed in theology, jurisprudence, medicine, philosophy, rhetoric, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.*

Both of these universities were perpetually endowed with the proceeds of the ecclesiastical property which had been confiscated during the progress of the war. In the Netherlands, as in other parts of Europe, the Church of Rome held vast estates, amounting, as it has been estimated, to one fifth of the entire property of the country. What was done with this property in England is known to every reader. When Henry VIII. carried out his reformation, the monasteries and convents being suppressed, their confiscated estates became part of the royal demesnes, or were handed over to greedy courtiers. The Hollanders believed in no such system of spoliation as this. When they established their reformation, they, too, stripped the Church of its superabundant and ill-used wealth. But the ecclesiastical property went neither into private coffers nor even into the general treasury for secular purposes. However misappropriated by Rome, it had been originally intended for pious uses, and to such it was returned. A portion was set aside for purposes of education; the rest went to the support of the clergy, and to endow the charitable institutions for which Holland always had been, and was to become still more, famous.

* Davies, ii. 202; Motley's "United Netherlands," ii. 8, 9.

Guicciardini, writing in the middle of the sixteenth century, tells how, even at that time, these people led the world in caring for the decrepit and unfortunate. Hospitals provided with every convenience were always open to the sick and aged. Besides these were establishments, like our modern retreats, in which old persons, by the payment of a certain sum, secured homes for themselves during the remainder of their lives. In each town persons of wealth and respectability were biennially appointed to receive alms in the churches and principal places of resort, and to administer such funds in their discretion, to which were added the proceeds of a small tax and the bequests of the charitable. Under their direction the poor were so well cared for that they were under no necessity to beg, which, in fact, they were not allowed to do except during stated hours on saints' days or holidays. The children of such as were unable to support them were brought up until a certain age at the expense of the State, and then bound out as apprentices to some trade or manufacture. In times of scarcity, the authorities of the town distributed food among the needy, whether native or foreign born. The people were so honest, industrious, and frugal that, except on such occasions, there were few requiring alms save the sick, maimed, and aged.*

As the long and bloody war with Spain went on, it left behind it a vast number of widows and orphans, besides the disabled soldiers and sailors, who form the saddest mementos of such a struggle. These the republic never forgot or neglected. With the proceeds of the confiscated property of the Church, that Church

---

* Guicciardini, "Belg. Des.," i. 179; Davies's "Holland," i. 489; Sir William Temple, i. 121–160, 191.

which had now become the public enemy, were founded, in every town, asylums and hospitals which cared for such unfortunates. In these institutions, admirably organized, equipped with every comfort, and administered with wisdom and economy, the orphans were educated, and the widows and battered veterans of the war spent their declining years in ease.* When Louis XIV. and Charles II. formed their unholy league for the conquest of the Dutch Republic, one monarch writes to the other, "Have no fear for Amsterdam; I have the firm hope that Providence will save her, if it were only in consideration of her charity towards the poor." We now can understand what the people of the cities which revolted from Spain had in view when they took an oath from their new magistrates "to protect widows, orphans, and miserable persons."†

When we consider that at this time England was overrun with hordes of sturdy beggars, and that her soldiers and sailors were allowed to die neglected in the streets, one need hardly ask from which country America and the world at large have derived their ideas upon these subjects. We view with just pride our soldiers' homes, our orphan asylums, and hospitals for the sick and wounded, but should not forget that in all this noble work republican Holland set us an example three centuries ago.

---

* See the reports of the Italians, Contarini and Donato, cited in Motley's "United Netherlands," iv. 558.

† See p. 197.

CHAPTER IV

REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

INDEPENDENCE DECLARED — ASSASSINATION OF WILLIAM OF ORANGE — RELIGIOUS TOLERATION ESTABLISHED — 1574–1585

For some two years after the unsuccessful siege of Leyden, but little of importance occurred in the field, where the war was dragging its slow length along. Negotiations were constantly going on for peace; but as one party demanded full religious liberty, and the other the absolute domination of the Church of Rome, no basis of agreement could be reached.

Still, though the insurgent provinces would not yield, their position was very perilous. Holland was cut in two by the capture of Harlem, and Amsterdam still held out for Spain. France, Germany, and England refused all aid, and the patriots saw nothing before them but the prospect of slow extermination. If need be, they said, they could "die in the last ditch;" but no men long for such a fate. At length, the Prince of Orange, seeing no other resource, and being threatened with war by Elizabeth and Protestant England, had made up his mind to an heroic step for the salvation of his people, although it involved the loss of their native land. The country, which their fathers had rescued from the waves, was to be given up; the accumulated wealth of centuries abandoned; and the nation, with its

religion and its liberty, was to seek a new home beyond the sea.

At this juncture Requesens met with a sudden death, leaving the army without a leader and the government without a head.

The death of Requesens was followed by results which changed the fate of Holland. For years the Spanish troops had been unpaid. They now rose in mutiny and wreaked their long-pent fury upon the peaceful cities of the lower Netherlands. In November, 1576, Antwerp, the commercial capital of the world, was sacked, as if it had been taken by assault. Eight thousand of its inhabitants were murdered, five hundred palaces were left in ruins, and twelve millions of property destroyed or carried off. In this massacre—called the "Spanish Fury"—no distinction was made on the score of religion; Catholic and Protestant, layman and prelate, being alike murdered and plundered by the Spanish soldiery who had come into the land to put down heresy. The destruction of Antwerp, and the slaughter of some twelve thousand peaceful citizens in other towns, brought about what was called the Pacification of Ghent, a consolidation of all the provinces to effect the expulsion of the foreign troops, and the restoration of the ancient privileges of the people. The union was only temporary, for the inhabitants of the southern states, most of whom were Catholics, soon returned to their old allegiance; but the interval gave the patriots of the North a much-needed breathing-spell. How they improved it we shall shortly see.

Late in 1576, Don John of Austria, half-brother of the King of Spain, the hero of Lepanto, a man whose life had been one romance, and who now at the age of thirty-one was accounted the foremost soldier of the

world, came to the Netherlands as successor to Requesens. He found a people inflexibly bent on the removal of the Spanish troops. Before this demand he at last reluctantly gave way, and to the number of ten thousand they took up their march for Italy. The joy experienced by the people at this triumph was, however, destined to a short life. It soon became apparent that the ideas of the new governor-general were no more liberal than were those of his hated predecessors. At the end of the first year of his rule the whole country again rose in revolt, the Estates-General declared Don John a public enemy, and a new act of union was signed between the provinces, by which, providing for the common defence, they also guaranteed mutual religious toleration. This was the last attempt to bind all the states together. It failed in the end, largely through the jealousy of the Catholic nobles, who disliked and feared "Father William," the idol of the people. An army of some twenty thousand men, among whom were thirteen companies of Scotch and English volunteers, met in the field an equal force under Don John, and was almost utterly annihilated, as usual, with a Spanish loss of only ten or eleven.

Meeting such a crushing defeat at the outset, the future would have looked very dark for the new Confederacy but that some other events gave signs of promise. In the first place, the Prince of Orange had taken advantage of the confusion which followed the death of Requesens to gain the cities in Zeeland which had stood out for Spain. Then Harlem and Amsterdam were recovered by an uprising of the people, so that two states were entirely freed from the foreign yoke. With these successes the other northern provinces fell into line, never thereafter to be separated.

Nor was this all. The hero of Lepanto had come to the Netherlands with a scheme which was to be the crowning achievement of his romantic life. He expected by making generous concessions to secure a speedy peace, and then to cross over to England with his army of veterans, place himself at the head of the Catholics, release and marry Mary of Scotland—now nine years a prisoner—drive out Elizabeth, and take possession of the English throne. The project had the approval of the pope, and might have been successfully carried out but for the action of the Netherlanders which forced the immediate dismissal of the Spanish troops.* Still, its effect was not lost upon Elizabeth. Slowly she was reaching the conviction that for her own security she must aid the rebels across the Channel. Her counsellors, one and all, were of opinion that she should generously espouse their cause; but this was impossible for a woman of her nature. Finally, however, in 1578, she loaned them, on good security, a hundred thousand pounds, and furnished them with five thousand soldiers, to be supported at their cost. With this they had to be content.†

In France the outlook was much brighter. As soon as the court recovered from its first excitement, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was seen to have been a blunder. Spain was the leading Catholic power of Europe, and as her ally France would have to take a subordinate position, while as a neutral or a secret enemy she could be first in influence. This consideration had led to a religious peace, in 1573, by which the Hugue-

* Creighton's "Age of Elizabeth," p. 151.

† Motley's "Dutch Republic," iii. 300, 338, 343. See as to her tortuous methods, Froude, xi. 127, etc.

nots were given possession of La Rochelle and three other important towns. In 1574, Charles IX., haunted ever by the spectre of his murdered subjects, and with their shrieks and groans ringing in his ears, sank into the grave and was succeeded by his brother. The new monarch, Henry III., was a believer in the policy of opposition to the growing power of Spain. After long negotiations, his younger brother, the Duke of Anjou, offered the states his services, with those of ten thousand troops. In August, 1578, they were accepted, and he was declared "Defender of the liberty of the Netherlands against the tyranny of the Spaniards and their adherents."

The French troops were valuable allies, and if the patriots had not been impoverished something might have been done against Don John. That unfortunate commander was, however, almost as badly off as they. Philip had at first supplied him with money, but for months past had exhibited his usual parsimony and procrastination. In fact, the king seemed jealous of his soldier brother, and was desirous not only that he should not succeed in any of his ambitious plans, but that he should not live to vex him with his martial glory. He had both his wishes. The invasion of England became impossible through the resistance of the Netherlanders; without money for his troops, all other operations were suspended, and in October, 1578, death (which was, as usual, attributed to poison) closed the career of the warrior whose sun had risen in such a blaze of splendor.

The air of the Netherlands had proved unwholesome to the last two governors. They were now to be succeeded by a man whose rule was longer, and whose influence was to be more powerful for evil. Alexander

of Parma was an Italian, a son of the trusted lieutenant of Charles V. by Margaret, his natural daughter, Philip's first regent of the Netherlands. He was a soldier only second in reputation to Don John, and was to make for himself a reputation even more brilliant. In addition, he had qualities possessed by none of his predecessors, for he had all of the Italian's subtlety, skill in intrigue, and diplomatic cunning, with an absolutely unselfish devotion to his master. In the field he never lost his head; in negotiations he never lost his patience. He pushed the war with vigor, but believed that it was cheaper to buy men than to conquer them with force. Unfortunately for the patriots, he had to deal in the southern provinces with a class of nobles who had no religious convictions and were eaten up with jealousy of the man whose lofty patriotism they could never comprehend. Working upon these feelings and by the lavish use of money, Parma, before he had been six months in the country, won back the five lower Walloon states and attached them again to Spain.

At about the same time, in 1579, the Prince of Orange effected a formal union of the seven northern Protestant provinces, binding them together by what is known as the Treaty, or Union, of Utrecht. This famous document, although at first not so intended, was the written Constitution of the Netherland Republic.

By its provisions the contracting parties agreed to remain forever united as if they were one province. Each state was, however, to manage its own internal affairs, and preserve all its ancient liberties. Questions of war and peace, and those relating to the imposition of duties, were to be decided by a unanimous vote of all the states; in other matters the majority were to decide. A common currency was to be established. And, finally,

no city or province was to interfere with another in the matter of religion.*

Up to this time the fiction had been retained that the rebellious provinces were subject to Philip, and were carrying on a war against him strictly within the lines of their respective charters or constitutions. But, in 1581, two years after the Union of Utrecht, all this came to an end. Of the seventeen provinces five had returned to their allegiance. The other twelve, seven of which had united together to act as one, were still in open arms. For years they had tried by negotiations to secure the ancient rights which Philip had sworn to maintain when he assumed the throne. At last, even the most hopeful had come to the conclusion that all efforts for peace were useless, and that but one resource remained—to throw off the yoke of their Spanish ruler by declaring their independence, and, if need be, seeking a new sovereign in other quarters. To accomplish the first of these objects, representatives from all the twelve states met at The Hague, and, on the 26th of July, 1581, solemnly declared their independence of Philip, and renounced their allegiance forever.

The Declaration of Independence then put forth is one of the most important documents in history. A translation of it was found among the papers of Lord Somers and is published in his "Tracts." That great statesman used it as a model for the famous Declaration of Rights by which England, a century later, proclaimed the abdication of James II., and the selection of the Prince and Princess of Orange to fill the vacant throne. Again, after another century, it furnished the model for the still more celebrated Declaration by which the thir-

* Motley, iii. 412.

teen American colonies announced their independence of Great Britain.

It began, "All mankind know that a prince is appointed by God to cherish his subjects, even as a shepherd to guard his sheep. When, therefore, the prince does not fulfil his duty as protector; when he oppresses his subjects, destroys their ancient liberties, and treats them as slaves, he is to be considered not a prince, but a tyrant. As such, the estates of the land may lawfully and reasonably depose him, and elect another in his room." Then followed a long recital of the grievous wrongs which the people of the Netherlands had suffered at the hands of Philip; the establishment of the Inquisition, the trampling on their guaranteed rights and privileges, the murders and massacres of the last quarter of a century, which they said justified them in forsaking a sovereign who had forsaken them. Obeying the law of nature, desirous of maintaining the rights, charters, and liberties of their fatherland, determined to escape from slavery to the Spaniards, and making known their decision to the world, they declared the King of Spain deposed from his sovereignty, and proclaimed that they should recognize thenceforth neither his title nor jurisdiction.*

Thus the dominion of Philip was abjured, but this did not mean the establishment of a republic. Such a scheme was not considered practicable, for the provinces thought themselves too weak to cope single-handed with the power of Spain. The renunciation of their allegiance was but the preliminary step to a new connection on which great hopes were founded. The Duke of Anjou

* Lord Somers's "Tracts." See as to the novelty and great importance of this Declaration, Rogers's "Story of Holland," p. 107.

was at this time engaged in the last scene of his memorable courtship of Queen Elizabeth. She had promised to marry him, and as her consort he could bring to the aid of the insurgents all the resources of Protestant England, while he would also have the moral support of France. With such prospects before him, although he had accomplished little as defender of their liberties, ten of the rebellious provinces now chose him as their sovereign. The other two, however, Holland and Zeeland, refused to unite in this action. They insisted that no one should rule over them except their beloved Prince of Orange. Being without personal ambition in the matter, and believing that under the circumstances the election of Anjou would be advantageous to the country, the Prince of Orange tried to reject the proffered honor, but his people would take no refusal, and he finally gave way.

The wooing of Elizabeth by Anjou forms, in some of its features, one of the most comical incidents in English history. The "Virgin Queen," as she loved to be called, was now in her forty-ninth year, and far from a paragon of beauty. Her face was long, and ornamented with a high hooked nose, little, dark, beady, short-sighted eyes, thin lips, and a set of black teeth.* She beat her maids of honor, boxed the ears of her courtiers, and swore like a fish-woman.† The Duke of Anjou was twenty years her junior, but apart from his youth had no advantage in personal appearance. He was below the middle height, puny, and ill-shaped. His face was scarred by the small-pox, covered with red blotches, and his nose so swollen

* Motley's "United Netherlands," i. 318, iii. 171, 359; "The Puritans and Queen Elizabeth," Samuel Hopkins, i. 122.

† Harrington, "Nugæ Antiquæ," i. 354; Drake, p. 418.

and distorted that it looked as if double; a proper feature, his enemies said, for a man who had two faces.* Added to these attractions was a voice which led Elizabeth to call him her little "Frog." Still, he was the heir to the throne of France, and at this juncture an alliance with that power may have seemed to Elizabeth essential to her security.

In the latter part of 1581, Anjou went to England for the third time to put an end to his long courtship. The arrangements for the marriage had been all completed, but perhaps a long look at such a lover was too much for a woman who even at sixty believed herself a Venus. For three months he dangled about the court, while she played the coy maiden in her teens. The English people were alarmed at the prospect of another papistical marriage, the marriage denounced by Stubbs three years before in the famous pamphlet which cost him his right hand. Outwardly the queen seemed determined to adhere to the engagement, but one pretext after another afforded excuses for delay. Possibly she may have felt doubtful of the promised aid from France in defending her kingdom against its enemies, or she may have wished to see how her future husband would conduct himself as sovereign of the Netherlands. But, whatever may have been her motives, the ceremony was postponed; and in February, 1582, her noble, or ignoble, suitor, leaving his

* The following epigram was circulated in England upon Anjou's departure for the Netherlands:

"Good people of Flanders, pray do not suppose
That 'tis monstrous this Frenchman should double his nose;
Dame Nature her favors but rarely misplaces,
She has given two noses to match his two faces."

—Taylor's "Romantic Biography of the Age of Elizabeth," i. 93. (London, 1842.)

mistress bathed in tears, recrossed the Channel, accompanied by a splendid retinue of English nobles, to assume the duties of his new position.*

When Anjou arrived in the Netherlands, he assumed in the ten provinces, where he had been elected sovereign, the position of a constitutional monarch, with such powers only as the people claimed had rightfully belonged to Philip. He was installed as duke, count, or marquis of the various states, and took a solemn oath to preserve inviolate the ancient liberties and to maintain the right of conscience. He was also to procure the assistance of his brother, the King of France, and maintain a perpetual league, offensive and defensive, between that kingdom and the provinces. As for Holland and Zeeland, they were to remain as they were, subject to the Prince of Orange.

But the new ruler, who had no more idea of constitutional liberty than Philip himself, and who had come into the country from the lowest motives of personal ambition, soon began to chafe under the restraints imposed upon him by the ancient charters. He complained that he was a monarch only in form, the real power being held by the States-General. A brilliant victory in the field might have done something for him, by winning him the hand of Elizabeth or by procuring substantial assistance from his brother; but he was no match for Parma, and could see nothing before him but a long contest, from which he would gain little. In this position, and incited by his French counsellors, who taunted him

---

* Despite his personal appearance, Anjou must have had some attractions. Hallam agrees with Lingard in thinking that Elizabeth had a real passion for him. "Const. Hist.," i. 233. The marriage, he says, was clearly repugnant to good policy.

with his insignificance, he attempted a movement which showed how little he understood his subjects. The plan was, with the aid of his own troops, to take possession of the most important cities and make himself supreme by force. The first attack was made on Antwerp, in June, 1583, but the burghers rose in force, drove out the French with great slaughter, and Anjou, who was waiting without the walls, retired in deep disgust. Such an act of treachery naturally gave rise to intense indignation, and the Estates wished to confer the sovereignty on the Prince of Orange. He peremptorily refused, declaring that under no circumstances would he place it in the power of Philip to say that he had been actuated by selfish motives. Finally, he succeeded in persuading the Estates to overlook the past upon the ground that it would be dangerous to break with France. The year was spent in negotiations looking to a renewal of the old relations. They proved fruitless, however, and were finally terminated by the death of Anjou, whose worthless career came to an end in the summer of 1584.

Brief and inglorious as was the rule of Anjou, and despicable as was his character, their connection with him was not without advantage to the Netherlanders. In such a contest every year, or even every month, is a decided gain. The northern provinces were daily growing in strength and in the feeling of self-confidence. The war was transferred largely to the South, and even the limited moral support of France and England had been of inestimable benefit.

During the whole movement the Prince of Orange had shown incomparable sagacity as a statesman, and Philip regarded him as almost his only enemy. Remove this enemy, he thought, and all disaffection would soon cease. The first attempt was made by bribery. When

Parma assumed the government he found many of the Netherland nobles in the lower provinces purchasable as cattle at a fair. Perhaps he thought that all men had their price; he certainly had no conception of the character of this man, or of his Protestant associates in Holland, no one of whom was ever bought with gold.* The Prince of Orange was offered any terms that he might name—the release of his son, the restoration of his confiscated property, the payment of his debts, and a million in addition. All such offers he met with silent contempt. His debts incurred during the progress of the war were enormous, almost sufficient to sweep away his vast estates; he loved his son, and no man had been fonder of luxury and all that wealth can buy. These things Philip and Parma knew, but they did not know the man.

Bribery proving of no avail, Philip now turned to murder. In June, 1580, he issued a proclamation, declaring the prince an outlaw, and offering a reward of twenty-five thousand crowns to any person who would rid him of "the pest." In addition, the assassin was to be forgiven any past crimes, however heinous, and, if not noble already, was to be ennobled "for his valor."† Following this ban, five successive attempts were made upon the great patriot's life. One, in 1582, proved nearly fatal, a bullet entering his neck and passing through the jaw. He thought himself mortally wounded, but, even in what seemed his last agony, did not forget the example of his divine Master. "Do not kill him. I forgive him my death," he said to the bystanders who rushed upon the would-be murderer. Then two more years rolled around and the bullet of the assassin proved effectual. On July 10th, 1584, Balthazar Gerard fired the

---

* Davies, ii. 656.

† Motley, iii. 493.

shot which brought such joy to Philip as he had not felt since the day of St. Bartholomew, but which wrapped a land in mourning. The pope, the Jesuits who aided in the plot, the assassin himself, and the monarch who ennobled and enriched his heirs, all declared that the murderer had done God's work. The victim died breathing the prayer, "God have mercy on my poor people!" Three centuries have judged between them.

Thus fell the foremost Puritan of the age, perhaps of all the ages. For sixteen years he had headed the contest against the power of Spain. In that time, although much remained to be done, a mighty work had been accomplished. At the outset there had been seventeen separate provinces—full of vitality and love of liberty, to be sure, but disorganized, undisciplined, unconscious of their power. Through them swarmed a host of Protestants, ready enough to die for their religion, but not knowing how otherwise to make their lives useful to the cause. Untrained to warfare, they fell in the field before Alva as before a cyclone. This, as we have seen, was not from lack of courage. Like the Spanish mountaineers, two centuries later, if their armies fought like mobs, their mobs fought like armies. What they did with discipline will appear hereafter, but at the opening of the struggle their future seemed indeed a hopeless one. To this people William of Orange came as a savior. His triumphs were not like those of Cromwell, for the latter's adversaries knew little more of practical warfare than his soldiers or himself. Besides this, Cromwell was a leader among a martial nation.* All

* A recent writer has well said that when an Englishman is in want of amusement he goes out and kills something. Froude's "Oceana." This instinct has always characterized the race.

their pleasures and pursuits made them at the time of the great rebellion the best material out of which to form an army. The Parliamentary recruits had the same opportunity to acquire discipline as their opponents, and hence, with more intensity of purpose, became invincible in the field.

With the Netherlanders it was very different. For centuries they had been pursuing the arts of peace, while their adversaries had been cultivating war. Their superior civilization at the beginning of the struggle worked against them, but in the end, engrafted as it was on a brave and sturdy nature, this high civilization told. That it did so, and that not in its despite, but by reason of it, they finally achieved and maintained their independence, while just the reverse occurred in England, is one of the most important lessons taught by history.

It was, therefore, in the beginning of the contest that the most difficult work had to be accomplished; and when the hour struck, William of Orange appeared. His task was to encourage the people, keep up their hopes, teach them their strength, heal their dissensions, reconcile their differences, and mould them together as one nation. At his death seven of the provinces had entirly thrown off the foreign yoke, and were bound together in a permanent union. Five more were in open revolt, although attached to the others by a lighter chain. Had he lived a few years longer, the republic might have embraced them all; but such speculations, of course, are idle. He had laid a great foundation, and with that history must be content.

In one quarter, however, his work was substantially finished, and if he had done nothing else, this alone would entitle him to imperishable honor. As the founder of religious toleration, which, largely through the influence

of Holland, has developed into religious liberty, the peculiar glory of the United States, every American at least should revere his memory.

It was an age when religious toleration, except as a political necessity, was a thing unknown. Sir Thomas More, in England, had playfully speculated upon the subject, but when placed in power had developed into a bitter persecutor.* William of Orange not only advocated, but practised, principles of full religious toleration. Nor were his theories, as is the case with many men, the result of indifferences or coldness of belief. He had been born a Catholic, and in youth was not free from the looseness of morals which the age permitted and excused.† But when in voluntary exile he turned his thoughts to religion and became a devout Christian. In October, 1573, he joined the Calvinists, and thereafter, in life and thought, was one of the straitest of the sect. Such converts usually swell the host of the intolerant. It was not so with him. He could bear with the errors of others, because he believed in the goodness of the Almighty, and felt himself unworthy of forgiveness. During his rule in Holland and Zeeland, where for years he was almost a military dictator, these principles were put to the severest test. Fortunately for the world, they were strong enough to stand the strain.

The people about him had been the victims of a persecution which had furrowed the soil with graves and filled the land with widows and orphans. When they came into power, by driving out the Spaniards, it was

---

* See Hallam's "Literature of Europe" for a judicious criticism of the famous "Utopia;" also Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" for an account of More in practice.

† His natural son afterwards became Admiral of Holland.

but human to think of retaliation. More than this, they had every other motive that ever bred intolerance in other lands, and all intensified in degree. The Catholics among them not only professed a creed which they believed born of hell, but, in addition, were largely public enemies or lukewarm friends. They were men whom they had fought in street broils, who had advised the surrender of their towns, and whom they suspected of plotting against their liberties. Under such conditions, loud were the cries for the extirpation or banishment of the hated papists; still louder were those for the suppression of their form of worship. Against all this William of Orange stood like a wall of adamant. Open or known civil enemies could be banished or suppressed, he said, but no man must be molested on account of his religious faith. Of course he was denounced. Ministers from the pulpit declared that he cared nothing either for God or for religion. Even his brother, John of Nassau, protested against toleration of the Catholics. But he carried the day; and when the union was formed between Holland and Zeeland, it was provided that no inquisition should be made into any man's belief or conscience, nor should any man by cause thereof suffer injury or hindrance.* The Reformed Evangelical Church was established for the state, but no other form of religion was to be suppressed unless contrary to the Gospel. Toleration thus became the corner-stone of the republic, and under this liberal doctrine all sects throve and were protected, even the Jews, who denied the Gospel, never being disturbed on that account.†

---

* Motley, iii. 59.

† In 1586, Catholics held office and taught school in the city of Leyden. Motley's "United Netherlands," ii. 333.

As some of the rebellious provinces contained a majority of Catholics, a system of toleration towards them would be dictated by wise policy. If, therefore, they alone had been protected, history might be content with giving William of Orange credit for statesmanship only, although that kind of statesmanship was then almost as rare as toleration from principle. But his conduct towards other religious bodies disposes of the theory that he stood on any except the highest plane of thought and action. In proof of this, we may look at the experience of one of these bodies, the most interesting of them all, especially to Americans, as the reader will see when we come to trace the growth of dissent in England.

Among the many sects brought forth in the early ferment of the Reformation, the Anabaptists have perhaps left the most unsavory reputation. First appearing about 1522, some of them had, twelve years later, been guilty in Holland of gross and immoral extravagances, which historians have fully pictured, and the remembrance of which has always clung around their name.* Such events it is characteristic of human nature to dwell upon, but corresponding stress has not always been laid on the subsequent history of this interesting people. In fact, their excesses were the work of but a minority of the sect, and were also of very brief duration. After a rule of a few months, their prophets were put to death, leaving behind them a numerous body of earnest disciples who had acquiesced in polygamous practices only from a conviction that they were divinely ordained. With their leaders gone, the offensive doctrines of the old dispensation were universally abandoned.

* Davies's "Holland," i. 396.

Most of the sect changed their name to Mennonites,* and they all confined themselves to tenets derived from the New Testament, which made them the most peaceful and inoffensive Christians of the world.

Their most striking article of faith, the one which gave them a name, was that baptism should be confined to adults, including those who had been baptized in infancy by other denominations. But this, if the most striking, was not the most important of their doctrines. In early days they were composed almost entirely of the unlearned, who could understand the simple teachings of the Founder of Christianity more easily than those of his philosophic successors. Hence it was, perhaps, that, antedating the English Quakers by more than a century, they took the words of the Great Master seriously,† and believed it wrong to resist evil, go to law, bear arms, take oaths, or assume any office of magistracy which might cause them to judge others. These tenets, of course, included the broad doctrine of entire separation of Church and State, and perfect liberty of conscience.‡ Private ownership of property they at first also abandoned as unchristian, holding that all things should be in common.§

---

* They called themselves Mennonites, after Menno Simons, of Friesland, a new leader, but by others were still called Anabaptists.

† A phrase used by W. D. Howells when reviewing "My Religion," by Count Leo Tolstoï, in *Harper's Magazine* for 1886.

‡ "The Anabaptists in Switzerland," by Dr. Philip Schaff, *Baptist Quarterly Review*, July, 1889.

§ Davies's "Holland," i. 396. The Russian author, Count Tolstoï, in "My Religion," without alluding to the Anabaptists or Quakers, advocates these doctrines with great ability, as embodying the principles of Christianity before the admixture of Greek philosophy or Roman paganism.

What they professed they practised. An incident which occurred in 1569, during the rule of Alva, illustrates their ideas of returning good for evil. A poor Anabaptist was pursued by an officer of justice, who, under the order of the Inquisition, wished to bring him to the stake. The fugitive passed over a frozen lake, the brittle ice of which cracked beneath his feet. The officer, following hard after, was less fortunate. He sank into the deep water, uttering cries for help. No one else was near to save him, and so the hunted fugitive, at the peril of his own life, recrossed the treacherous ice and rescued his enemy from certain death. Then, giving life for life, he went back and met a martyr's doom.*

Such a people had no political influence, and some of the Calvinists of the time thought their heresies worthy of the severest punishment. Zwingli, in Switzerland, had denounced their doctrine of adult baptism as deserving of death, and under his influence a number were executed there, while in Germany they suffered by the thousand.† In Holland an attempt was made simply to exclude them from citizenship, and even Sainte Aldegonde, the accomplished scholar and friend of the Prince of Orange, was in favor of the project. How he was met is told in one of his own letters. "The affair of the Anabaptists has been renewed. The prince objects to exclude them from citizenship. He answered me sharply that their yea was equal to our oath, and that we should not press this matter unless we were willing to confess that it was just for the papists to compel us to a divine service which was against our conscience. In

* Motley's "Dutch Republic," ii. 280, citing Brandt's "History of the Reformation," sec. 1, b. x. p. 500.

† "The Anabaptists in Switzerland."

short, I don't see how we can accomplish our wish in this matter. The prince has uttered reproaches to me that our clergy are striving to obtain a mastery over conscience."*

This was in 1577. In the next year the authorities of Middelburg, in Zeeland, attempted a persecution of the Anabaptists in their midst. This the prince at once arrested. He wrote to the magistrates reminding them that these peaceful burghers were always perfectly willing to bear their share of the common burdens, that their word was as good as an oath, and that as to the matter of military service, although their principles forbade them to bear arms, they had ever been ready to provide and pay for substitutes. "We declare to you, therefore," said he, "that you have no right to trouble yourselves with any man's conscience so long as nothing is done to cause private harm or public scandal. We therefore expressly ordain that you desist from molesting these Baptists, from offering hindrance to their handicraft and daily trade by which they can earn bread for their wives and children, and that you permit them henceforth to open their shops and to do their work according to the custom of former days. Beware, therefore, of disobedience and of resistance to the ordinance which we now establish."†

Thus did William of Orange protect even the members of this poor and despised sect. His influence was effectual, for we hear little more of any attempts at their persecution in the Dutch Republic.‡

---

* Motley, iii. 206. Brandt's "History of the Reformation," sec. 1, b. xi. pp. 588, 589. † Motley, iii. 334. Brandt, i. 609, 610.

‡ In Holland, the Mennonites, or Anabaptists, were exempted from military service in 1575, from taking an oath in 1585, and from ac-

Some eighty-five years after this last event, a governor of the colony which the Dutch West India Company had planted on the Hudson River, in America, began on his own account a persecution of some harmless Quakers who had been driven from Massachusetts. An appeal was made to the home authorities at Amsterdam, who extinguished it at once by a letter containing these memorable words: "At least the consciences of men ought to remain free. Let every one remain free as long as he is modest, moderate, his political conduct irreproachable, and as long as he does not offend others or oppose the government. This maxim of moderation has always been the guide of our magistrates in this city; and the consequence has been that people have flocked from every land to this asylum. Tread thus in their steps, and we doubt not you will be blessed." * In this manner did the principles of toleration established by William in Holland bear their fruits in America, twenty years before the great English Quaker carried them to Pennsylvania.†

---

cepting any public office in 1617. In Zeeland, freedom from military service and oaths was granted them in 1577, but there, at a later day, and also in Frisia, they paid a heavy poll-tax for the military exemption. Barclay's "Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth," p. 608. How they were burned at the stake in Protestant England we shall see in due time.

* Brodhead's "History of New York," i. 707.

† Penn himself fully appreciated the religious liberty which existed in the Dutch Republic. In 1686, a century after the death of William of Orange, he published a treatise entitled "A Persuasive to Moderation," an argument for liberty of conscience to all church dissenters. In this work he gives an illustration of what real liberty can accomplish. "Holland, that bog of the world, neither sea nor dry land, now the rival of the tallest monarchs, not by conquests, marriage, or accession of royal blood, the usual way to empire, but

Passing over still another century, we come to the time when, having thrown off the authority of Great Britain, the thirteen American colonies adopted state constitutions. Of all the thirteen, two, and two only—Virginia and New York—embodied in their great charters of freedom guarantees for religious liberty.

But even the action of Virginia, much as it is deserving of praise, falls somewhat behind the action of New York. The other states retained religious tests for their officials, or in some form made religious discriminations. Virginia, in 1776, issued a Declaration of Rights, which, it is claimed, formed part of her Constitution, laying down the principle, "That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other." These were novel sentiments in that region, and bore fruit in time; still, the state retained its established church until 1785, and in various other ways fell short of practising full religious liberty.*

---

by her own superlative clemency and industry, for the one was the effect of the other. She cherished her people, whatsoever were their opinions, as the reasonable stock of the country, the heads and hands of her trade and wealth; and making them easy on the main point, their conscience, she became great by them. This made her fill up with people, and they filled her with riches and strength."

* See "Proceedings of American Historical Society," iii. No. 1, p. 205. Even in Rhode Island, founded by Roger Williams, Roman Catholics were deprived of the suffrage, under a statute which was passed in 1719, and not repealed until 1783. See Repealing act,

New York, however, in its first Constitution, adopted in 1777, proceeded at the outset to do away with the established church, repealing all such parts of the common law and all such statutes of the province "as may be construed to establish or maintain any particular denomination of Christians or their ministers."* Then followed a section much broader and more explicit than that in the Virginia Declaration of Rights—a section which, it is believed, entitles New York to the honor of being the first organized government of the world to assert by constitutional provision the principle of perfect religious freedom. It reads as follows: "And whereas, we are required by the benevolent principles of rational liberty, not only to expel civil tyranny, but also to guard against that spiritual oppression and intolerance wherewith the bigotry and ambition of weak and wicked priests and princes have scourged mankind, this convention doth further, in the name and by the authority of the good people of this state, ordain, determine, and declare that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever hereafter be allowed within this state to all mankind."†

Thomas Jefferson, to whom Virginia is chiefly indebted for her religious liberty, derived his religious as well as his political ideas from the philosophers of France. But the men who framed this constitutional

---

"Mass. Hist. Coll.," 3d series, v. 243. However, as there were no Catholics in Rhode Island, this law did not interfere with the practical religious liberty that always existed in that colony. If the state had adopted a Constitution when the others did, it doubtless would have been as liberal as was that of New York.

* Section 35. † Section 38.

provision for New York, which has since spread over most of the United States, and lies at the base of American religious liberty, were not freethinkers, although they believed in freedom of thought. Their Dutch ancestors had practised religious toleration, they expanded toleration into liberty, and in this form transmitted to posterity the heritage which Holland had sent across the sea a century and a half before.*

How far the example of Holland influenced the statesmen who, at a later date, placed in the Federal Constitution its guarantees of religious liberty can be shown by very high authority. This instrument, as originally adopted in 1787, contains a provision† that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." By an amendment, added in 1791, Congress is prohibited from making any law "respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

James Madison, of Virginia, was the chief advocate of this amendment in Congress. Writing about it, some

---

* The first Constitution of Maryland, 1776, provided for a belief in the Christian religion as a qualification for office. In 1868 this was changed to a "belief in the existence of God." The first Constitution of Massachusetts, 1790, contained the same provision as that of Maryland. It was struck out by an amendment in 1822, but the state church was retained until 1833. The first constitutions of New Jersey and North Carolina restricted office-holding to Protestant believers in the Bible. This was modified in New Jersey in 1844, and in North Carolina in 1868, so as to limit the test to a belief in God. The only religious disabilities now existing in any of the United States are the exclusion of atheists from office in New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, and the exclusion of clergymen in Delaware, Maryland, and Tennessee.

† Article vi.

thirty years later, he said: "It was the belief of all sects at one time that the establishment of religion by law was right and necessary; that the true religion ought to be established in exclusion of every other; and that the only question to be decided was, which was the true religion. The example of Holland proved that a toleration of sects dissenting from the established sect was safe and even useful. The example of the colonies, now states, which rejected religious establishments altogether, proved that all sects might be safely and advantageously put on a footing of equal and entire freedom. It is impossible to deny that in Virginia religion prevails with more zeal and a more exemplary priesthood than it ever did when established and patronized by public authority. We are teaching the world the great truth that governments do better without kings and nobles than with them. The merit will be doubled by the other lesson, that religion flourishes in greater purity without than with the aid of government." *

We have thus traced some few of the results which followed in the train of the religious toleration established in Holland before the death of the Prince of Orange, a subject which will be more fully discussed in some later chapters when considering the independent sects which grew up in England. That he was the leader in settling this great principle admits of no question, but still he should not have all the honor. It is unjust, as many writers have done, to charge the Puritans of England or New England with the intolerance of a portion of their number, and it is equally unjust to

* Madison to Edward Livingston, July 10th, 1822, "Letters and other Writings of James Madison," iii. 275, 276.

take from the people of Holland their meed of praise. Much as they loved their chosen ruler, he could have accomplished little had they not stood behind him and given him support. As we have seen, narrow-minded fanatics, there as elsewhere, pronounced toleration a covenant with hell, but they must have been in a decided minority. Certainly they had no power, after the death of the Prince of Orange, to overthrow his work. This fact tells its own story. Holland never knew any persecution for religious differences, except for a few years in the next century, after the famous Synod of Dort, a subject which will be considered when we reach that period.

Nothing so well illustrates the difference between England and the Netherlands, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the contrasted effects produced by the death of Cromwell and by that of William the Silent. Cromwell was the military and civil leader of the English Commonwealth. The revolution which raised him to power was not a sudden outburst of popular excitement. Had it been of that character, one might have looked for its speedy termination, for such violent ebullitions are usually short-lived. This outbreak, on the contrary, had been gathering force for many years, and then was very slow in taking form; but it was based on the assertion of rights which, if they ever existed, had rested in comparative desuetude for many generations. It was this fact which caused the weakness of the Commonwealth, for men will always bear an old burden with greater patience than a new one, even although the latter may be lighter. Its rapid downfall was due to the further fact that the movement went too far. The soldiers who conquered the royalists and decapitated their king thought that

they could establish a republic such as they saw existing in the United Netherlands. Unfortunately, the people behind them, even those who preferred liberty to servitude, knew little of self-government. It was, in truth, putting new wine into old bottles. Cromwell died, and the Commonwealth died with him.

Such a result as this was anticipated by Philip, when he offered a reward for the removal of his illustrious arch-enemy. Hearing that he had succeeded, his exultation was natural enough. But he little comprehended the people, of whom his victim was only a representative. He had no conception of what their centuries of civilization and practice in self-government had accomplished for them, and never imagined how independent they were of any leaders. He was soon, however, to be fully undeceived.

When the news of the assassination of William the Silent spread through the Netherlands like the shock of an earthquake, all was naturally in confusion. He had been indeed the father of his country, and the people felt that they were orphans. In his own family there was no one then qualified to take his place, although he left eleven children and a widow, the daughter of the great Coligny. The eldest son was still in Spain, where, sadly enough, he had been made a Spaniard in everything except reverence for his father's memory. The next son, Prince Maurice of Nassau, was a brave but quiet, self-contained lad of eighteen, giving as yet little promise of being the foremost general of his age. He, however, was shortly thereafter chosen stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland, in recognition of his father's services. The salary now attached to the office, with an additional provision for the widow, came in time of need for the unhappy family. The prince had died so

deeply in debt that even his furniture, silver, and wardrobe had to be sold to satisfy his creditors.

Still, although without a head, the people had no thought of making peace with Spain. On the very day of the assassination, the Estates of Holland passed a resolution "to maintain the good cause, with God's help, to the uttermost, without sparing gold or blood." In a few days the States-General met. Their first work was to appoint an executive council of eighteen, selected from the different provinces, with Prince Maurice at its head, to conduct military operations. Then the question arose as to permanent arrangements for the future.

As we shall see hereafter, the republic had already come, but its presence was unrecognized. No idea prevailed as yet in the mind of any one that the contest could be carried on alone. During the lifetime of William ten of the states had experimented with the worthless Anjou as a sovereign, because he was the brother of a king, and affianced to a queen. They all now concluded that they must place themselves directly under some foreign power, who would help them against Spain, preserving their ancient liberties, but otherwise taking the place which had been forfeited by Philip. Among the European states, but two were so situated as to be available. These were England and France. England was nominally Protestant, but was governed by a queen who hated and persecuted the Calvinists more bitterly than she did the papists. It was not to be expected that she would have much friendship for the strict Calvinists of the Netherlands. On the other hand, France was nominally Catholic, but religious toleration had been practised there for years. The monarch was childless, and it was known that he could have no children. The next heir to the throne, Anjou being

dead, was the chivalrous Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Huguenots. Under such circumstances, the prospects in France seemed to be more favorable.

With the French king, therefore, negotiations were opened directly after the death of the Prince of Orange. We need not go into the details; suffice it to say that they extended over eight precious months, and were then terminated by the final declination of the proffered sovereignty. The people of the Netherlands did not at first know what brought about this sudden decision. From the earnest assurances of the Huguenots and the ambassador of the king himself, they had been led to expect a different result. The course of events told the story. The Catholics of Europe were unwilling that Henry of Navarre should accede to the throne, and were plotting for his exclusion. The pope, who was working for the interest of the Church, and Philip of Spain, who saw that civil war in France would cut off all hope of aid to the Netherlands from that quarter, found tools to do their work. They were the same instruments who, thirteen years before, had carried out the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—the king's mother, Catherine de' Medici, and the Duke of Guise.*

To execute their plans, all the Guise family, supported by the prominent Catholic nobles of the kingdom, en-

* In justice to the memory of Catherine as a woman of ability, however bad at heart, it should be said that she consented to the League with great reluctance, and only as a last resort. She was now, as she had been thirteen years earlier, very desirous of an alliance between England and France to aid the Protestants in the Netherlands. Now again Elizabeth refused such an alliance, and exhibited the same chicanery as before. This conduct again drove Catherine into the arms of the ultra-Catholics, and the king, having no other course open, went with his mother. Froude, xii. 88, etc.

tered with Philip into the memorable "League." Philip was to supply money from Spain, and the other parties were to extirpate heresy in France and in the Netherlands. Henry of Navarre was to be declared incapable of succeeding to the throne, and his place was to be taken by his father's younger brother, whom, however, the Duke of Guise had secretly decided to supplant, while Philip as secretly had decided that his own daughter was to take the place. Thus civil war was again to raise its head in the land, for the miserable monarch, as weak and helpless as his brother Charles, was forced to ally himself, at least openly, with the enemies of France.

All these arrangements were completed, but kept concealed, when, in March, 1585, the deputies from the States-General received their final answer. Within two weeks the Duke of Guise unfurled the banners of the Holy League. Four months later the French king, at its dictation, issued the edict which was to drench France with blood. By its provisions, all former edicts guaranteeing religious toleration were revoked. Death and confiscation of property were now proclaimed as the penalty of heresy. Six months were allowed to the nonconformists to make their peace with Mother Church; after that period they were to leave the country, or expiate their crimes upon the gallows. The towns held by the Huguenots were to be given up, while the Guise party was to receive certain cities as security that the bloody edict should be carried out. The next month the pope thundered his decree from the Vatican, excommunicating Henry of Navarre, stripping him of all dignities, titles, and property, and declaring him incapable of ever ascending the throne of France.

Surely Philip of Spain had here done a satisfactory

piece of work in his campaign against the Netherlands. He had lighted a flame which for many a long day would destroy all hope of aid from France. The white-plumed knight was not the man tamely to surrender his inheritance, nor did his followers purpose either to go into exile or quietly to ascend the scaffold. They flew at once to arms, fought heroically, and ultimately saved themselves by the reconciliation of their leader with the Church of Rome; but needing aid themselves, could render little to their co-religionists in Holland.

Meantime the Prince of Parma was making sad havoc in the lower Catholic portion of the United Provinces. There it was that the death of the founder of the republic was most seriously felt. He had held the general union together solely by his matchless skill in diplomacy. Now that he was gone, it seemed in danger of utter ruin. City after city was captured or made peace with Spain. Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and Mechlin, all fell in turn, and finally, in August, 1585, Antwerp was taken, after a siege of seven months, one of the most memorable in the history of war.

With the fall of Antwerp the prospects for religious or civil liberty in Europe seemed very dark. In Germany, the emperor was the nephew and brother-in-law of Philip, and also a strict Catholic. The Protestant princes were apathetic, and, being Lutherans, to them the Calvinists were almost as obnoxious as the papists. On the southeast lay the Ottoman empire, where the Turk, still formidable, made the nation tremble at each breath. No assistance could be looked for from that quarter. How little could be expected from the Protestants of France has been already shown. Spain seemed marching on to universal dominion. In 1580, she had conquered Portugal, in a campaign which Alva closed in less than two

months. This conquest nearly doubled her power. While she had been winning possessions in the New World, her neighbor had been acquiring even more valuable ones in Africa, India, and the islands of the Pacific. Though less in extent, the Portuguese settlements brought in more wealth than the colonies of Spain. All these possessions Alva's sword had transferred to Philip, and with them the only navy that as yet rivalled his own. He now claimed the mastery of the Pacific as well as that of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

And where was England, Protestant England, all this time? Where was the great queen who should have been, as she has been styled, the defender of Protestantism in Europe? The question as to the position of England will be discussed in some subsequent chapters. That relating to Elizabeth can be briefly answered. Throughout the whole struggle she had been trying simply to save herself. Men have often died for a cause; she was willing that any cause should die for her. At the darkest hour of the contest, when Alva had subdued all the Netherland provinces, except part of Holland and Zeeland, and William of Orange was almost in despair, she had bent all her energies to prevent him from obtaining aid from France, lest that power should gain too great strength. Again, when Requesens came on the scene with his policy of reconciliation, based on a restoration of civil liberty provided the rebels would give up the religious question, she had used all her influence to have his terms accepted. Such a peace would have benefited her commerce, and she could not understand why these obstinate Dutchmen should stand out for what seemed to her the merest trifle, simply the right to worship God as they saw fit. She had no sympathy and no patience with such sentiments. To her the conduct of William

of Orange and his compatriots was as incomprehensible as the bigotry of Philip.

For twenty-seven years Elizabeth had now kept the throne. Enemies surrounded her on every side, but she had secured peace for the kingdom and safety for herself. "No war, no war," she cried to her ministers, and generally evaded it through the complications between France and Spain by some piece of feminine duplicity. The religious question gave her the most trouble. Here her motto was, "No zeal." On the one side stood the great majority of her subjects, not sentimentally zealous to be sure, but still imbued with Catholic traditions. On the other side was arrayed a rapidly growing class of Reformers, believing in the doctrines of Calvin, and regarding the practices of the Romish Church as no better than idolatry. Her sympathies were with the former, but her main object had been to keep control of the situation and prevent the committal of England to either side. Thus far she had succeeded in maintaining a policy of indifference; but in spite of all her efforts, and notwithstanding her own want of religious convictions, events were marching on which compelled a more decided stand. As these events were to force England into the contest with Spain, and to bring about the relations with the Netherlands which were to prove so potent in their influence both upon England and America, we may well pause here to consider with some care what kind of a land England was, and by what kind of a people it was inhabited, three centuries ago. Thus only shall we comprehend the history and the character of the English and American Puritans to whom this period gave birth.

CHAPTER V

ENGLAND BEFORE ELIZABETH

The preceding pages have been devoted mainly to the affairs of the Netherlanders. I have attempted to sketch the progress of their civilization, and to show the nature of the conflict which they were waging against the mightiest power on the globe. It is now time to direct our eyes across the Channel, and to inquire into the condition of England and her people when these Puritans of Holland, fighting for civil and religious liberty, were to broaden the field of conflict by taking in their neighbors. To this subject, therefore, the attention of the reader is invited. Following the method adopted with relation to the Netherlands, I shall first discuss the influences which made the England of this age, and shall then, in subsequent chapters, treat somewhat in detail of domestic life and manners, industrial pursuits, private and public morals, education, religion, the organization of society, the administration of justice, and such other matters as historians, until recently, have usually ignored. Wars and political intrigues, although important in their way, will here find no more space than is necessary to elucidate their effects on the civilization of the people.

The materials for this description are ample enough, and yet every writer who attempts to tell the truth about the Elizabethan age must approach the subject with some diffidence. In the first place, it is no easy task to reproduce, although imperfectly, the features of

a country or of a people as they appeared three centuries ago, and this difficulty is very much increased when the country is one whose modern aspect is so familiar to the reader. It is somewhat like describing the youthful beauty of an old, wrinkled grandmother. Persons who have never seen her may imagine how she looked when in her teens, but you cannot persuade her little grandchildren that she ever danced, romped, or went around without glasses and false hair.

In the case of England there is a further difficulty. Scarcely any old country of modern times has been altered so much in its outward appearance in the last three centuries, and probably no people of any age have changed so greatly, in some respects, as the English have done in the same space of time. The change has been brought about by the influences of commerce, manufactures, and scientific agriculture, all three of which pursuits were almost unknown to the subjects of Elizabeth. The modern Englishman is familiar to us, and, because we know him so well, we find it almost impossible to picture his ancestors before their devotion to modern occupations.

The final and main difficulty, in the present case, lies in the false glamour thrown around this particular age by the poet, novelist, and so-called historian (made up of the other two in varying proportions), all of whom are carried away by a very natural enthusiasm over the many-sided display of energy and the marvellous power of assimilation which characterized this period. These writers, to describe the magnificence of Elizabeth's court, tell of her three thousand gowns and numberless jewels; they say little of her council chamber, with its carpet of hay or rushes, of her eating with her fingers, and of the practices by which her jewels were obtained. They tell

how, on one occasion, she made an address in Greek, but refer lightly to the fact that among her nobles were men who could not read a line of English. They never tire of describing the virtues of Sir Philip Sidney, but do not always note the depth of the gulf which divided him from most of the other men about the court. They glory in the piracy of Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and their associates—piracy which all the rest of the world then denounced, and which, if repeated now, England would be the first to extirpate. They cite the names of a few scholars to show how learning flourished in this age, forgetful of the multitude of scholars much more advanced upon the Continent; and then point to Spenser, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and a host of others, and ask what more could be desired of an age which produced such poets.

In answer to all this, the historian can only give the facts; but they are gathered from many quarters, all confirming each other, and established by unquestionable witnesses. These facts show that, in the age of Elizabeth, England, as to most features of general civilization, bore about the same relation to the Netherlands that Russia bears to-day to Western Europe, or that the states of Central America bear to Massachusetts. This is a great pivotal truth in American and English history, although one which is often overlooked. Keeping it in mind, it is an easy matter to understand how the English Puritans who subsequently emigrated to America developed when brought into contact with the Hollanders, while we can also see why their progress was so much arrested. As for those who remained at home, the question will perhaps appear of no less importance when we come to see how they were affected by their neighbors across the Channel.

The chief obstacle to viewing the Elizabethan age in its true light unquestionably consists of its literature, the most brilliant of modern times. It is very difficult for one to realize, at first, that an age could be in many respects but semi-civilized which produced such poets as Shakespeare, Spenser, and Ben Jonson, and such a thinker as Francis Bacon. Still, this difficulty arises simply from overlooking the character of the contributions which these men of genius furnished to the treasures of the world. A little reflection will serve to clear the vision.

Civilization is a fruit of very slow growth. Poetry does not make it, nor are great poets even a sign of its existence. Looking at the two masterpieces of the world which preceded the works of Shakespeare, we find one produced in Greece, in an age so early, and among a people so rude, that the very personality of Homer has been seriously questioned; while the other was produced in Italy long before the revival of learning.* In fact, the dissemination of knowledge, the settled condition of society, the respect for the rights of others, and the general unpicturesqueness, which distinguish a civilized from a barbaric age, are not favorable to the production of great poets.

The true poet is a seer; one who sees, and not one who reasons. Untrammelled by theory, unembarrassed by the thoughts of others, he notes down what he observes in nature, in his fellows, in himself. The period which produces such men in numbers is not a long one among nations making progress. Knowledge checks the

* Dante was born 1265; the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, which gave the great impetus to the study of Greek literature, and re-civilized the world, occurred in 1453.

poetic faculty, by developing other faculties more practical in their character. Men begin to study what they see, compare facts, test their observations by those of their fellows, and poetry passes into science. Rude nations always speak in figures. The North American Indian describes an aged man as "an old tree dead at the top." His treaty with the whites is, he says, "a covenant chain, first of wampum, then of hemp, and finally of silver, thrown around a great rock." Little children prattle in the same fashion; the shadows play with them; for them the stars bloom out at night; and many a fond parent can trace the loss of a poet or a painter to the time when the spelling-book and arithmetic began to do their work.* The poetry of the Elizabethan age grew out of the fact that a people who had slumbered for ages were awakening into intellectual life.

The same causes which produced a Shakespeare also produced a Bacon. Each was a seer; the one looked at men and nature with the eye of a poet, the other with the eye of a philosopher; the one saw the passions, pathos, sentiment, and humor of life, the other its practical, unromantic features. Men in England, before their time, saw but little; these great seers used their eyes and set down what they saw. Bacon's whole philosophy turns on the principle, that people shall see for

---

* Macaulay, in his essay on Milton, says: "Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body; and, as a magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. . . . We think that as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines." He therefore concludes that Milton was greater as a poet, not because of his learning, but in despite of it. For a fuller and much abler discussion of the subject, see Taine's "English Literature," "Shakespeare."

themselves, and reason from what they see and not from what they imagine or have been told by others. He marks an epoch in English thought, if England can be said to have had any thought before his time, but he simply told his countrymen to do what scientific men upon the Continent had done for generations. Still, with his transcendent genius he did this better than any one before his time, and hence his world-wide fame.*

Bacon was not a learned man, knowing nothing of the discoveries of Kepler, Galileo, Harvey, or Gilbert. He had scarcely any knowledge of geometry; in fact, was ignorant of, and looked down on, all mathematics.† Harvey said of him that he wrote about science like a lord chancellor. In credulity he resembled his predecessor, Roger Bacon.‡ He even rejected the theory of Copernicus, and died believing that the sun revolves around the earth.§ As Hallam has pointed out, he was more eminently the philosopher of human than of general nature.‖ This is the province of the poet and the seer.

---

* Stewart's "Life of Reid," sec. 2; Hallam's "Literature of Europe," iii. 133.

† Hallam, iii. 127–129. "In mathematical, astronomical, and physical knowledge he was far behind his contemporaries."—Humboldt's "Cosmos," iii. 106 (London, 1851).

‡ Hallam, i. 89. "His natural history is full of chimerical explanations. Like the poet, he peoples nature with instincts and desires; attributes to bodies an actual voracity; to the atmosphere a thirst for the light, sounds, odors, vapors, which it drinks in; to metals, a sort of haste to be incorporated with acids."—Taine.

§ For an account of Bacon's ignorance of science, see also "Francis Bacon," by Edwin A. Abbott (London, 1885), pp. 338, 455; Gardiner's "History of England," iii. 394. As to his Latin, Abbott, p. 452.

‖ Hallam, iii. 127. His "Essays," therefore, gave him his greatest literary fame in England.

Yet as a man of science he was far ahead of his time in England.* He translated the works on which he thought his fame was to rest into Latin, which he called the universal language, although he knew it but imperfectly, affirming that "English would bankrupt all our books." "He had sown the great seed in a sluggish soil and an ungenial season. He had not expected an early crop, and in his last testament had solemnly bequeathed his fame to the next age."†

As to the mode in which Shakespeare, as an author, was appreciated by his contemporaries in England, the following facts should be borne in mind. In 1623, Heminge and Condell published the first complete collection of his plays, only thirteen or fourteen of which had been printed in his lifetime. But for their efforts it is more than likely that his unpublished dramas, some seventeen in number—among which were "Julius Cæsar," "The Tempest," and "Macbeth"—would have been lost to the world.‡ Only one other edition appeared prior to 1664, so that in forty-eight years after his death but two editions of his works, probably not making together a thousand copies, were given to a public which absorbed seventeen editions of Sidney's dreary "Arcadia."§ There is no evidence that he was known to Raleigh, Sidney, Spenser, Bacon, Cecil, Walsingham, Coke, Hooker, Camden, Hobbes, Donne, Cotton, or any others, except a few

* We should except Gilbert, Hariott, and Harvey, with Napier in Scotland, all of whom, however, had prosecuted their studies abroad. Abbott, p. 338.

† Macaulay's "History of England," i. 377.

‡ Shakespeare does not mention his manuscripts in his will, and seems to have cared nothing for literary reputation. His sole ambition was to take rank as a country gentleman.

§ Johnson's "Life of Milton;" Symonds's "Sidney," p. 74.

of his fellow-craftsmen.* With the decay of English energy, after the restoration of the Stuarts, he was almost entirely forgotten.† In 1707, a poet named Tate produced a work called "King Lear," the subject of which, he said, he had borrowed from an obscure piece of the same name, recommended to his notice by a friend. This "obscure piece" was Shakespeare's "King Lear." At the beginning of the eighteenth century Lord Shaftesbury complained of his "natural rudeness, his unpolished style, and his antiquated phrase and wit." In consequence, he was excluded from several collections of the modern poets. In 1765, Johnson gave him some praise, and finally Garrick, the grandson of a Huguenot refugee, restored him to the stage and to the patriotic admiration of the English people.‡ Since that time German criticism has done much to give him his present high position.

Bacon, as a scientist, did not fare much better in England than did Shakespeare as a poet. Upon the Continent, where there were men of learning, his works met with a cordial reception. The Latin treatise "De Augmentis" was republished in France in 1624, the year after its appearance in England, and was translated into French as early as 1632. Editions came out in Holland in 1645, 1652, and 1662, and one in Strasburg even ear-

* R. G. White's "Shakespeare," p. 185.

† Sir William Davenant, poet-laureate to Charles II., reproduced some of Shakespeare's plays, but only after a rewriting which worked a transformation. "Macbeth," for example, was put on the stage, "with alterations, additions, amendments, new songs, machinery for the witches, with dancing and singing." As rewritten, it was published in 1673. "The Interregnum," by F. A. Inderwick, p. 265.

‡ Guizot's "Shakespeare," p. 122. In the "Vicar of Wakefield," Goldsmith shows how little he thought of the Shakespearian revival.

lier, in 1635. In England, only one edition in Latin appeared after the first—namely, in 1638—followed by an indifferent translation in 1640. The "Novum Organum" was thrice printed in Holland, in 1645, 1650, and 1660. In England it never came separately from the press. King James said of it, "that it was like the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." No edition of his works as a whole was published in England before 1730, but one appeared at Frankfort in 1665.*

In studying the great literary lights of the Elizabethan age, one may recall his experience in witnessing a sunrise in the Alps. He rises hastily, throws on his clothes, and takes his stand. Looking far away, the clouds and distant peaks are first tinged with pink, then bathed in glory. Down creeps the golden flame, the lofty trees are all on fire, and even the shrubs are priceless coral. So the transformation scene goes on, until the lowest valleys are resurrected from their darkness. Rapt in the contemplation of a miracle, one forgets how early is the morning. But when the day has fairly broken, when the pink and gold have disappeared, and all the landscape lies in common sunlight, the traveller feels the chill, and, retiring to his blankets, waits for warmth and comfort until the sun has travelled farther on its course. What the sunrise is to noon, what the first crop upon the prairie is to the fruit of scientific agriculture, that is poetry to civilization.†

---

* Hallam's "Literature of Europe," iii. 131, 132.

† Perhaps no one has discussed this subject more ably and incisively than Matthew Arnold. "Genius is mainly an affair of energy," he says, "and poetry is mainly an affair of genius; therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in poetry, . . . and we have Shakespeare." Again: "We have con-

To understand the English people of the time of Elizabeth, we must know something of their antecedents; for, like all other nations, they were an evolution from the past, shaped by race and natural environment. Here, therefore, I shall ask the reader's patience while I call attention to some facts in their prior history which seem to me to bear a construction rather different from that usually placed upon them. This history has very peculiar features, in the disregard of which we can find the explanation of many popular misconceptions as to the Elizabethan age, and as to the origin and character of the new life which that age developed.

Taking any point in civilization, one is apt to think of the approach to it as if it were a gradual ascent. This has been the case in the history of the Netherlands, in the brief story of America—with but a slight exception in New England after the death of the first Puritan settlers—and it was true of classic Greece and Rome, until the period of their decline. Our school histories of England sometimes leave the impression that such was the course of progress there; certain important events and certain leading characters stand out upon the record,

---

fessedly a very great literature. It still remains to be asked: "'What sort of a great literature? A literature great in the special qualities of genius, or great in the special qualities of intelligence?'" He answers the question by showing that the literature of genius, "stretching from Marlow to Milton," led up to "our provincial and second-hand literature of the eighteenth century." The energy had died out. When it appeared again in the days of the Napoleonic wars, the literature of genius also reappeared. On the other hand, France had a literature of intelligence developed in prose, which led up to "the French literature of the eighteenth century—one of the most powerful and persuasive intellectual agencies that have ever existed, the greatest European force of the eighteenth century."—"The Literary Influence of Academies," "Essays in Criticism," pp. 47–50.

and we are left to think of them as landmarks on a highway, instead of mere beacon lights flashing from isolated mountain-peaks. For example, we have glowing descriptions of civilization in Britain under the Roman rule. As to Anglo-Saxon times, we are told of the "Venerable Bede," and his famous school at Jarrow; of Alcuin, John Scotus, the learned King Alfred, and his establishment of Oxford University—the last, however, a myth. Under the Normans, we hear of the superb cathedrals, Oxford with its thirty thousand students—another myth; Magna Charta, and the learning of Roger Bacon. Still later on, we read of the poetry of Chaucer, hear of Wyclif and his Bible, Sir Thomas More and the Oxford Reformers, and finally of the glorious age of Elizabeth, with its world-renowned poets, statesmen, and men of action.

Glancing simply from one of these events or individuals to another, or even following the panegyrists of the English Constitution, one might imagine a people steadily rising in civilization until they had reached their present stage of development. But in this respect the experience of England is almost unique in the history of nations. To follow her career is not to ascend the side of a single mountain, but to cross a series of mountain chains separated by valleys nearly as deep and dark as that from which one makes the first ascent. Comparing it to a stream, it resembles a river flowing through a prairie country, which twists and curves, returning on its track, so that after following it for scores of miles the traveller finds himself no nearer to the sea.

The truth of this statement will be seen by any one who runs over the course of English history prior to the Reformation. Why it should be so is the important question. Why should a people, living on an island by

themselves, be subject to great tidal waves of progress? And why did the receding wave bring them back and leave them stranded on the shore?

There is a tendency among some English historians to represent the Englishman as of almost pure Anglo-Saxon blood, and to trace his progress to an Anglo-Saxon influence.* If this were so, we might expect that steady and gradual advance in civilization the absence of which is so marked a feature of English history. Just the reverse appears to be the truth, and here is the key to many perplexing problems.

The people, to be sure, are mostly of Anglo-Saxon origin, and this has given them their sturdy character; but they have received foreign accessions from time to

* The great impetus in this direction has been given by German writers, who have devoted more attention to the study of early English history than the English themselves. See Gneist's "Hist. of the English Constitution," *passim*, for an account of German books on English institutions. These writers, in addition to the fact that they sometimes use the microscope too much, are naturally inclined to magnify the Germanic influence, and have perhaps unduly affected their English disciples. In regard to Gneist's history, in particular, to which I shall refer frequently hereafter, another fact must be kept in mind. As he states in his preface, he is deeply interested in political matters, and for years has been writing history for political purposes. Opposed to republics, he sees his ideal of a state in the former strong monarchy of England, holding it up to his countrymen as a model of a government developed on Germanic lines. With such objects in view, the conclusions of a writer may well be questioned, however valuable his facts. Since these pages were written, an able Frenchman has published a little book on the "English Constitution," the preface to which contains some very judicious remarks on the modern tendency to exaggerate the Anglo-Saxon element in the development of English institutions. "The English Constitution," by Émile Boutmy (translation, Macmillan & Co., 1891).

time, and to these accessions we can trace their waves of progress. Following back the institutions which are England's boast, such as her parliament, trial by jury, and her judicial system, we find them derived, not from the Anglo-Saxons, but from the Normans, who were French by domicile, and cosmopolitan by education. Looking carefully at the lives of the great men who stand out like beacon lights on her early historic page, we find them to have been moulded by a foreign influence and taught by foreign masters. The most brilliant epoch in her early history, that which witnessed the erection of her cathedrals and the founding of her universities, was the one in which she was under a foreign domination. When, finally, the Normans had been absorbed and the intimate connection with the Continent broken off, the foreign influence died out. Then, as the old rude Anglo-Saxon element regained the mastery the people very rapidly went down. About the time of Elizabeth they had reached their lowest depth, from which they emerged only when brought again into touch with the elder civilization of the Continent, especially that developed in the Netherland Republic. Let us now for our proof take a hasty review of this early history—a review which will perhaps prepare the way for a clearer appreciation of the mode in which these foreign influences were exerted at a later day.*

When we first hear of Britain, it was occupied by a people who had probably crossed the Channel from Gaul. They belonged to the great Celtic race, which, pouring out from Scythia in Asia, had swept over the whole of

---

* In the following summary I shall refer mainly to modern English or German writers, who will hardly be suspected of want of partiality for their ancestors or Germanic kindred.

Northern and Western Europe. Those who crossed to Britain were closely connected with the Belgæ, whom Cæsar found in the lower Netherlands. The early settlers were probably pressed north by new-comers, and so passed into Wales and Scotland, and thence across the narrow sea to Ireland.*

First attacked by Cæsar and his legions, the Britons were a century later conquered by the Romans, and the whole lower portion of the island was held by the conquerors for about three centuries and a half. Macaulay, in his history, states that Britain "received only a faint tincture of Roman arts and letters," but the results of investigations carried on since his time tell a very different story.† The island was studded with peopled cities, and the open country dotted over with the luxurious mansions of the great land-owners, built of stone, and heated with furnaces. The ruins of some of these mansions have been discovered, which show what progress had been made in art. "Every colonnade and passage had its tessellated pavement; marble statues stood

---

* "The Pedigree of the English People," Thomas Nicholas (second edition, 1868), p. 48.

† "The Roman civilization had been completely introduced, military roads had been constructed from one end of the country to the other, and vast works of public utility and ornament had been completed. The bridges, gardens, baths, and villas of Rome had been reproduced in Britain, and all the pomp and luxury of the imperial court made familiar to our forefathers."—Nicholas, "Pedigree of the English People," p. 104. Says Palgrave: "The country was replete with the monuments of Roman magnificence; Malmesbury appeals to those stately ruins which still remained in his time, the twelfth century, as testimonies of the favor which Britain had enjoyed; the towns, the temples, the theatres, and the baths . . . excited the wonder and the admiration of the chronicler and the traveller."—Palgrave, i. 323.

out from their gayly painted walls; while pictures of Orpheus and Pan gleamed from amid the fanciful scroll-work and fretwork of its mosaic floors." * Commerce, too, had arisen. The harvests became so abundant that Britain at times supplied the necessities of Gaul. Potteries were established, which turned out work of great artistic beauty.† Tin-mines were worked in Cornwall, lead-mines in Somerset and Northumberland, and iron-mines in the Forest of Dean.‡ In addition to all this, Rome became Christianized, and conferred upon Britain her religion, as well as her arts, her military system, and her laws. British churches arose over all the land to take the place of the pagan temples; or, as in other parts of Europe, the buildings erected to the divinities of ancient Rome were dedicated to the rites of the new national religion.

Such, in faint outline, was the condition of Britain before the irruption of the barbarians whom we call Anglo-Saxons, and who transformed it into England. To the antiquarian, it must be a fascinating work to explore the old ruins, and unearth the unquestionable evidence of this former glory. But to the historian of England who seeks to trace the progress of her people, the growth of her institutions, and the development of the national character, all this story is unimportant, for every vestige of the former civilization was wiped out by the pagan conquerors. To the student of Continental

---

* Green's "Making of England," chap. iii. etc.

† The Roman pottery found in the New Forest, where its manufacture was extensively carried on, surpasses, artistically, anything since produced in England. "The New Forest," p. 225 (London, 1880, John R. Wise).

‡ Green, Introduction and chap. v.

history, and for our purposes, however, it is of great importance. Britain was a very distant province. There was nothing in its situation, resources, or inhabitants which would entitle it to the special favor of Rome. If, therefore, it profited for a time so largely from the Roman domination, one can conceive what must have been the effect of this same influence upon the provinces nearer home, where, as we have seen in a former chapter, the Roman civilization was not extinguished.*

Having climbed a mountain-top, we are now to descend into a valley as deep and dark as can be well imagined. In 411 the Roman legions are recalled from Britain, in consequence of the irruption of the Goths under Alaric. Returning temporarily, they finally abandon the country in 427, and the people are left to fight alone against their own enemies, the Picts and Scots. Powerless against such foes, they call to their aid the corsairs who had threatened their coast for generations. Hengist and Horsa, with their allies—Saxons, Angles, Jutes, and Frisians, all Low-Dutch tribes—repel the enemy from the North, but conquer the island for themselves, and give it the modern name of England. The process of conquest was a slow one, and this explains its character, for the Britons made a stout resistance, retreating only step by step. Thus, a century and a half were needed for the work, but it was done with Anglo-

---

* Speaking of Italy, Freeman says: "No vulgar error is more utterly groundless than that which looks on the Goths and other Teutonic settlers as wilful destroyers of Roman buildings or of other works of Roman skill. Far from so doing, they admired, they preserved, and, so far as the decaying art of the time allowed, they imitated them."—"Origin of the English Nation," lecture of Jan. 5th, 1870, at Kingston-on-Hull, published in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

Saxon thoroughness. In the end, every vestige of the ancient civilization was extinguished; the towns were depopulated and laid waste; the mines were closed for ages; the villas reduced to ruins; Christianity was blotted out, and the whole country made a desolation. The island was again a barbaric pagan land.*

English historians naturally dwell on the bright aspect of this conquest—the introduction of liberal institutions, the free barbaric blood, and the general love of freedom which animated the new-comers. But we must remember that, in the growth of nations, we find at the bottom, as at the top, the idea of personal independence. When we compare the history of this people with that of the Netherlanders, who, although of the same blood, assimilated the civilization of ancient Rome, we can judge how much institutions can accomplish for society while it is passing through the intermediate stages.

What manner of people these new-comers were can be gathered from various sources. To the Romans, all the men who conquered Britain and founded England were known under the common name of Saxons, and the Roman provincials distinguished them from the other tribes who were attacking the empire by their thirst for blood and disregard for human suffering. While men noted in the Frank his want of faith, in the Alan his greed, in the Hun his shamelessness, what they noted in the Saxon was his savage cruelty. Dwelling upon the Continent, the main aim of their pirate raids was man-hunting, and it had with them a feature of peculiar horror. Before setting sail from the hostile country which they had attacked, their custom was to devote one man out of each

---

* See "Lectures of Freeman," cited above, and Green's "Making of England."

ten of their captives to a death by slow and painful torture.* "Foes are they," sang a Roman poet of the time, "fierce beyond other foes, and cunning as they are fierce; the sea is their school of war, and the storm their friend; they are sea-wolves that live on the pillage of the world."† A century after their landing in England, the Britons knew them only as "barbarians," "wolves," "dogs," "whelps from the kennels of barbarism," "hateful to God and man."‡

Transplanted into England, they did not change their nature. Having passed over the land like a tempest of fire, burned the churches, murdered the priests at the altar, and blotted out all civilization, they settled down to enjoyment. Divided into a large number of petty tribal kingdoms, domestic wars became innumerable.§ For very many years their history is, as described by Milton, little more than the battles of kites and crows.‖ In time there come intervals of peace. The smaller tribes are swallowed by the larger; little kingdoms appear; a rude form of law and order is established; and, finally, early in the ninth century, Aegberht, who had been brought up at the court of Charlemagne, subdues the whole island south of the Humber, and the kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons first takes its place among the states of Europe.¶

Meanwhile great social changes have affected the in-

---

* Green's "History of the English People," vol. i.

† Idem. ‡ Idem, p. 48.

§ Gneist, "History of the English Constitution" (trans. London, 1886), i. 40.

‖ The aim of life, says Taine, "was not to be slain, ransomed, mutilated, pillaged, hung, and, of course, if it were a woman, violated." —"English Literature."

¶ Gneist, i. 42.

herited freedom of the people. When the barbarians landed in Britain they were substantially free, for their rulers were elected by all the freemen. War and a settled residence beget the king.* By the time of Alfred, he had become the "Lord's Anointed," invested with a mysterious dignity.† Treason against him was punished with death, and he was the fountain of honor. The king, from among his comrades, created a new order of nobility, whose members gradually supplanted the old chiefs. Much of the land was in early days held in common; it was now carved out into estates for the king's dependants. Thus the freedom of the peasant passed away. His freehold was surrendered to be received back as a fief, laden with services to its lord, for in Alfred's day it was assumed that no man could exist without a lord.

Gradually, as the kingdoms increased in size, the share of the freemen in all public affairs was greatly diminished. There was no election of delegates to national or local assemblies, as in later times; each man had to appear and vote in person. Theoretically, there was a great assembly of the people, in which resided all ultimate authority—the higher justice, imposition of taxes, framing of laws, the conclusion of treaties, the division of the public lands, and the appointment of the chief offices of state. "Practically, the national council shrank into a gathering of the great officers of Church and State with the royal thegns, and the old English democracy

* Kingship appears among the English at a time when it was unknown among the Continental races to whom they were most closely related. Gneist, i. 14.

† Alfred, when a boy, went to Rome, and was anointed by the pope. Ranke's "History of England," i. 20. Other kings had been anointed, however, before his time.

passed into an oligarchy of the closest kind."* These people are simply entering upon the first stage of civilization.

The wars and a settled residence also gave a great impetus to slavery. No rank saved the prisoner taken in battle from this doom; and the markets of the world, as far as Rome, were filled with slaves from England. Debt and crime also swelled the ranks of the unfree. Fathers sold their children, husbands their wives. The master could slay his chattel; it was only the loss of a thing. Fleeing from bondage, he might be chased as a strayed beast, and flogged to death if a man, or burned if a woman.† The progress of Christianity produced a little amelioration of his state. One bishop denied Christian burial to kidnappers, and prohibited the sale of children by their parents after the age of seven. Another punished with excommunication the sale of child or kinsfolk. Many owners manumitted their slaves, and the slave-trade from English ports was finally, in the tenth century, prohibited by law. This prohibition, however, for a long time remained ineffective. Until the Conquest the wealth of English nobles was said sometimes to spring from breeding slaves for market. It was not until the reign of the first Norman king that the traffic was finally suppressed.‡

Across this dark and dreary waste we can here and there catch glimpses of sunshine, although fitful and evanescent. A young deacon named Gregory sees in Rome some English slaves exposed for sale. He becomes interested in the far-distant island, whose people

---

* Green's "Short History," pp. 89, 90, 91. Gneist, i. 101–108.

† Green, p. 50.

‡ Idem, p. 89. "Life of Bishop Wolstan," cited by Taine.

once were servants of the Church, and when elected pope sends Augustine with forty comrades to effect its reconversion. One of the petty kings has married a Christian from France, and this helps on the work. Augustine arrives in 597, but in the end actually accomplished little. The real conversion of England came from Ireland, where Christianity had not been blotted out by the Saxons, and where piety and learning had fixed their home.* Naturally the conversion of the masses did not at first go very deep. They became Christians after the type of Clovis across the Channel, who, having witnessed the Passion Play, cries out, "Why was I not there with my Franks?" As we see through all their literature, the gospel of love, the teachings of the New Testament, made no more impression on their minds than on those of their descendants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to whom the Bible came again as a revelation. They were all equally attracted more by the Old Testament, with its wars, massacres, and tales of blood and vengeance.

Still, the very fact of belonging to the Church of the world had its effect; it brought the island into contact with the old civilization of the Continent, and the connection bore some fruit.† In 668, a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, arrives from Rome, is made Archbishop of Canterbury, and the English Church of to-day, so far

---

* Green's "Short History," p. 58. In the times of Tacitus the ports and harbors of Ireland were better known to the Romans than those of Britain, from the concourse of merchants there for purposes of trade. "Life of Agricola," sec. 24.

† Gneist pays a high tribute to the Anglo-Saxon Church for its early work, while showing how, in later days, it fell into rudeness and sensuality, i. 85–87, note. Before the Norman Conquest it had acquired about one third of the property of the kingdom, p. 110.

as its outer form is concerned, becomes the work of his hands.* A school is established, which the Venerable Bede attends, where he learns Greek, for the first time taught in England, and with it imbibes a taste for science and letters. Bede passes his life at the monastery of Jarrow, gathers six hundred pupils about him, becomes, as Burke calls him, "the father of English literature," and dies in 755, translating the Gospel of St. John into the vernacular. But upon his death the kingdom of Northumbria, in which he lived, is desolated by incessant wars, the land is laid waste, his scholars are dispersed, and nothing is left of his work but the forty-five volumes which attest his industry, and a name which glorifies his age.†

Later on, in 800, just as the English are becoming one nation,‡ the Danes come in, as utterly heathen and as savage and ferocious as the followers of Hengist and Horsa. They at once wipe out almost all of civilization above the Thames.§ In about seventy years they become masters of the land.‖ Then King Alfred appears on the scene, a man who, seen through the dim mist of tradition, is one of the world's heroes. He roused the people against the Danes, founded a kingdom in the lower part of the island, established peace in his realm, reduced the laws to system, and became the teacher of his people.¶ Alfred did all that he could to correct and

---

* Green's "Short History," p. 65. † Idem, p. 74.

‡ Gneist, i. 42.

§ Ranke, i. 17; Green's "Short History," pp. 78, 79, 82.

‖ Gneist, i. 105.

¶ Ranke, the great German historian, pays this tribute to Bede and Alfred. "The first German who made the universal learning derived from antiquity his own was an Anglo-Saxon, the Venerable

inform the ignorance of his countrymen, to which they had been reduced by the Danish conquest. When he began to reign, he could find scarcely a priest in the kingdom able to render the Latin service into English. For the benefit of the common people he translated several Latin works, with annotations which sound of the primer. He established schools at court, where the sons of the nobility were instructed in the rudiments of learning; and, taking an idea from Roman jurisprudence, he codified the laws, prefacing them, after the Puritan fashion, with the Ten Commandments and a portion of the law of Moses.

Alfred dies, and under one of his successors the Danish portions of the country are brought into complete subjection.* Then follow a few years of peace and national prosperity. But again civil war breaks out, and the heathen Danes reappear in new and greater hordes. They march through the land amid the light of blazing towns and homesteads, and in the end put their own ruler on the throne.† Cnut proves a wise and beneficent monarch, and for twenty years gives the country peace. But he dies in 1035, and under his tyrannical and incapable successors there ensues a reign of blood, which prepares the way for the coming of a greater conqueror than the Dane.

And now what was the condition of the Anglo-Saxons after a residence of six centuries in England?

In some important particulars, as we have seen, they certainly had retrograded. The old idea of personal freedom had largely disappeared. The land now, in-

---

Bede; the first German dialect in which men wrote history and drew up laws was likewise the Anglo-Saxon."—Ranke, i. 13.

* Aethelstan, 924–941. † Green, p. 91.

stead of being the domain of freemen, had become the home of nobles and their retainers, beneath whom was a race of serfs.* Still, many of the early ideas prevailed among the body of the people, to come to maturity at a later day. Aside from their passion for warfare, and their drunkenness—to which latter vice they, like the Netherlanders, have always been addicted—the English were a moral race. If they had no respect for beauty, they loved truth. This, with courage and fidelity, they held in supreme honor. Dwelling apart, not sensuous, inclined to melancholy, taking his pleasure sadly, as Froissart afterwards said of him, the Englishman built up the modern idea of home and family, in which the wife is the presiding deity.† In the early days upon the Continent, she was her husband's companion in his wanderings; now that he had settled down to cultivate the soil, and had embraced Christianity, she became the manager of his household. The wife lived for her husband and children—a narrow, confined existence perhaps, but one which will breed heroes.‡

---

* "The strength of the freedom of the common people, the self-respect, and the martial excellence of the Anglo-Saxon ceorl diminished from century to century, in spite of the guardian power which the king wielded."—Gneist, i. 108. As this writer has pointed out, the chief outward survival of the past was the preservation of the old Germanic judicial system which still surrounded personal freedom with protecting barriers (p. 113). As law was then administered this was not much, but it was something.

† Gneist, p. 114.

‡ Alfred thus describes her for his countrymen: "The wife now lives for thee—for thee alone. She has enough of all kind of wealth for the present life, but she scorns them all for thy sake alone. She has forsaken them all, because she has not thee with them. Thy absence makes her think that all she possesses is naught. Thus, for

Courage, fidelity, respect for truth, and love of home are great virtues, and in time will make the English the master race of the world; but they are virtues, after all, which are found among barbaric tribes. We can trace their originals in the picture which Tacitus draws of the ancient Germans in their native wilds. Of civilization the people had but a tinge, and that was derived from Rome and Roman Christianity. For the six centuries after the landing of Hengist and Horsa on the shores of Britain the history of England is almost a dead level, broken here and there by little hillocks, which seem to promise progress.* The progress, however, did not follow, for in the middle of the eleventh century only about a third of the soil is under cultivation, and that of the rudest kind; the old Roman influence is gone forever; the new Romish churches and abbeys have been largely demolished; the great scholars are dead, the schools dispersed, and learning well-nigh extinguished. The one great result which has been accomplished for the future in all these years, apart from the introduction of a rude form of Christianity, is the substantial consolidation into one people of the heterogeneous mass of the early conquerors.†

---

love of thee she is wasted away, and lives near death from tears and grief."—Quoted by Taine, "English Literature."

* The chief eminence appears in the eighth century, when the kingdom of Northumbria had its famous schools at York and Jarrow, and was the intellectual centre of Western Christian Europe. Green, p. 72. But this period was brief.

† The English system was strong in the cohesion of its lower organism—the association of individuals in the township, in the hundred, and in the shire. On this better-consolidated substructure was superimposed the better-consolidated Norman superstructure. Stubbs, i. 278.

We are still in a very dark valley, but before us at length rises a lofty, brilliant mountain; it is the Norman Conquest, which, bringing with it for a time the civilization of the Continent, becomes the most important event in English history.*

The Normans proper were descended from the Northmen, or Scandinavians, who founded the kingdoms of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. They have been called pirates, and such they were; but they were of a very different type from the early Saxons or the vulgar pirates of a later day. Their corsairs were, in fact, the merchants of the North, combining, according to the custom of the times, commerce with piracy. That they should have made such rapid development after they settled in France, formerly seemed something like a miracle, but the miraculous element is rapidly passing out of history. In this case, recent investigations show that long before the Normans left their Northern home they, too, had been brought into contact with the great reservoirs of civilization to which modern Europe owes so much. Sailing up the Dwina and the Oder, and then down the Volga and the Dnieper, they had for ages been in communication with Constantinople and the regions about the Black Sea and the Caspian. Thence they had brought back spices, pearls, silks, and linen garments. All this may seem strange enough to those who have been accustomed to regard the country about the Baltic as an unexplored wilderness of barbarism until a recent date. But it must be remembered that until about the tenth century the only communication

* "The will of destiny cannot be gainsaid. Just as Germany, without its connection with Italy, so England, without its connection with France, would never have been what it is."—Ranke, i. 38.

between the Mediterranean and Northern Europe was by inland routes. It is possible that even the frozen North benefited more from this communication than England under its Anglo-Saxon rulers.*

Leaving their Northern homes, these merchant corsairs had ravaged the coast of Europe as far as Spain, had plundered many cities, including Paris, and had made their name terrible even in Italy itself. In 911, Charles the Simple of France locates a band of them on French soil, in a district afterwards known as Normandy, thinking thereby to purchase their allegiance. The scheme proved a marked success. Rolf, or Rollo, the pirate chief, receives baptism, takes the title of duke, and becomes a loyal servant of his king. It was by Norman

* Upon the island of Gothland, in the Baltic, have been found great numbers of Roman and Byzantine coins, and its surface is dotted over with the ruins of ancient buildings, many of them of great size and architectural beauty. Canon Adam, of Bremen, a chronicler of the eleventh century, tells of a trading city at the mouth of the Oder, "a town rich in the wares of all Eastern people, and which contains much that is charming and precious."—"The Hansa Towns," by Zimmern, p. 23. The towns of the Hanseatic League derived their wealth from trade with the Baltic. It is a curious fact that so early as the tenth century German traders dealing with England paid part of their tribute in pepper, a product peculiar to the East. Idem, p. 16. Some writers have traced a connection between the Venetians of the Adriatic and the Vends or Venedes of the Baltic. Idem, p. 23. See also, as to this whole subject, "The Viking Age," by Paul Du Chaillu, especially vol. i. chap. xv. pp. 262 and 276; also vol. ii. p. 219. When the English opened a trade with Russia, in the days of Elizabeth, they attempted one trip to Persia by the old route of the Northmen, up the Dwina, down the Volga, and across the Caspian Sea. Camden, p. 418. This voyage, which, I believe, has never been noticed by later historians, shows that the route was known even five hundred years after the Norman Conquest.

help, later on, that France was raised to the rank of an independent kingdom; and Hugh Capet, instead of being a vassal of kings of German lineage, became the father of French sovereigns.*

For over a century and a half these Northmen had been settled on the soil of France, intermarrying with the natives, imbibing the ancient civilization, and, with the aptness for culture which marks a mixed race, making even more rapid progress than the French themselves. As a Teutonic people, they were perhaps remotely related to the Anglo-Saxons, but they bore little resemblance to their distant kinsmen whom they found in England. William of Malmesbury, the old chronicler, says: "The Saxons vied with each other in their drinking feasts, and wasted their goods by day and night in feasting, while they lived in wretched hovels; the French and Normans, on the other hand, lived inexpensively in their fine large houses, were besides studiously refined in their food, and careful in their habits."

These, then, are the men who, in 1066, to the number of sixty thousand, about one third Normans and the rest made up of other nationalities, land at Hastings, conquer England with its two millions of inhabitants, and make it for centuries a French country. The conquest was an easy one. The Frenchmen, for so we may call them all, were trained warriors, fighting on horseback, with long steel-pointed lances, and clad in complete armor. The English fought on foot; some in armor wielded heavy battle-axes, but the mass of the army was composed of rude peasants carrying scythes, clubs, and sharpened poles. The heavy but swift-moving cavalry gave the victory to the foreigners.

* Fisher's "Outlines of Universal History," p. 247.

It took but a few years under the rule of the conquerors to change the face of England. The land was registered in Domesday-book, and, to a large extent, parcelled out among the retainers of the Norman king. Each new proprietor set out at once to build a castle for his own protection, and to overawe his neighbors. Even the stone of which these castles were constructed was brought from Caen, in France.* At the death of King Stephen, a century later, eleven hundred and fifteen of these fortresses dot the surface of the island. Within the castle, at court, in the halls of justice, and even in the church, the inmates are foreigners and the speech is French.† In the schools, pupils were in time forbidden to speak English. Later on, in the universities, the students were required by statute to converse in Latin or French.‡ In the thirteenth century laws are written and judicial proceedings are all carried on in French. For nearly three hundred years the English language almost disappears among the upper classes, and, looking only at the surface, it seems forgotten. It continued mainly, if not solely, among the small proprietors, the tradesmen of the towns, the peasants, and the serfs.§

But the Normans did much more than to build castles and introduce a foreign speech and literature. The conquest was made in one of the great ages of history—an age which was not to be paralleled until the days of the Renaissance. It had been predicted, for so the clergy read

---

* Ranke, i. 35.

† William the Conqueror, it is said, attempted to learn English, but gave up the task in despair.

‡ Regulation of Oriel College, 1328.

§ Hallam; Green; Freeman in *The Chautauquan*, March, 1891.

the Book of Revelation, that the year 1000 was to witness the destruction of all things terrestrial, and during the preceding century the world came to a standstill, awaiting the dread event. Within three years after the close of the century, when it was discovered that the prediction was unfounded, men awoke to a new life. Architecture felt the first impulse, and churches were renewed in every part of Europe, especially in Italy and France. Then were formed the first associations of builders, essentially composed of men bound by a religious vow, who cultivated the art in convents and monasteries.* The Frenchmen loved art. Already in the seventh century they had sent to England some of their "masters in stone."† Now, under the Normans and their successors, they proceeded to cover the island with superb cathedrals, which, inferior only to those in France itself, bear witness, not alone to the architectural skill, but to the spirit of devotion which animated the builders. Later on came the Crusades, in which the Normans played so great a part, and which brought Europe into contact with the civilization of the Saracens and Jews, developing a love of learning little known before in Western Europe.

From the time of the subversion of the Roman Empire by the barbarians, the cultivation of letters had been carried on exclusively in the monasteries, and in the chapels of cathedral churches. Now a new spirit was abroad. The communes achieved their independence in France and Italy; and, at the same time, the new life given to the study of Roman law, and the development of scho-

---

* "The Arts in the Middle Ages," by Paul Lacroix (translated, London, 1870), pp. 377, 378.

† Idem, p. 356.

lasticism in the North of France, united at Bologna and Paris a numerous body of teachers and scholars, who were organized in the twelfth century into the corporations known as universities, upon the model of those long before established by the Moors in Spain.* First in Northern Europe arose the University of Paris, which grew out of the teachings of Abelard from 1103 to about 1136.† Here, as elsewhere, the Normans were apt pupils. Between the Conquest and the death of King John, they established five hundred and fifty-seven schools in England.‡ Among these institutions were the two renowned universities which have contributed so much to the glory of English learning.

The early historians of England carried back the foundation of Oxford to the days of King Alfred, but that myth is now abandoned. It appears from the records that nothing is known of any school or so-called university at Oxford until the year 1133, when a teacher from Paris, Robert Pullus, began to lecture there on the Bible. He taught for five years, and then went to Rome. A few years after his departure, Vacarius, an Italian, appeared in England and began a series of lectures at Oxford on the Civil Law, which he had studied at Bologna. In 1149, he made a careful abstract for English students

---

* Abelard, it is claimed, was educated at the Moorish university in Cordova.

† See for an interesting history of this university and its influence on France, "De l'Organization de l'Enseignement dans l'Université de Paris," par Charles Thurot, Paris.

‡ Taine's "English Literature," p. 61. Before the Conquest, they had founded at Bec, in Normandy, "the most famous school of Christendom."—Green. From this school came the first two Norman Archbishops of Canterbury, the great scholars Lanfranc and Anselm; both, however, Italians.

of the Code and Digest of Justinian. King Stephen, becoming alarmed at the threatened innovation, ordered the lectures to be discontinued, and forbade Englishmen to own any treatise on foreign law. But all repressive measures proved ineffective. Vacarius remained in England, and before long the Civil Law became one of the recognized studies at the university.* Here, then, we see another link binding England to the civilization of the Continent.†

In the history of learning in England, much as it owed to Rome, we should not forget its debt to the Jews, the men who, with the Saracens, did so much in carrying the torch of science and letters through the darkness of the Middle Ages.‡ Here again the Nor-

* Lyte's "History of the University of Oxford," 1886, p. 11.

† General statements have sometimes been made in relation to the state of education in England during the time of the Normans, which the modern reader is accustomed to receive with a smile of incredulity. But as the subject is investigated the smile will probably die away, and the investigator will begin to realize how rapidly England went down after the disappearance of the men who built her cathedrals and founded her universities and schools. See "Village Life Six Centuries Ago," in "The Coming of the Friars and other Historical Essays," by the Rev. Augustus Jessopp (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889). A fuller reference will be made to this essay in the next chapter, when I describe the state of education under Elizabeth. It is interesting, in this connection, to compare the English descriptions of Richard I. with those given of him by modern French investigators. The picture of the "Lion-hearted" king drawn by most English writers leaves the impression of a coarse, ignorant soldier, whose distinguishing traits were physical strength and brute courage. Viollet-Leduc, in his "Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'Architecture Française du XI^e^ au XVI^e^ Siècle" (Paris, 1868), describes him as a man of genius and "an engineer full of resources, experienced, foreseeing, capable of leading his age" (iii. 82).

‡ See Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe."

mans, in their protection of this people, are entitled to great honor for their worldly wisdom, if for nothing more. When William the Conqueror established himself in England, a number of wealthy Jews followed him from Normandy. He settled them in the principal towns, giving them a section, called the "Jewry," to themselves; and although they could not own land, and were in the eyes of the law but chattels of the king, yet they were allowed to build synagogues, and their persons and property were fairly well protected for nearly two centuries—the centuries of England's greatness. It was with the money borrowed from them that the castles and cathedrals were constructed, which sprang up over the island as if by magic.*

Connected as they were with the Jewish schools in Spain and the East, they opened up the way to the study of the physical sciences in England. They appear to have founded a medical school at Oxford; and it should never be forgotten that Roger Bacon, the first man of science that England ever produced, although he studied at Paris, was also a pupil of the Jewish rab-

* How far they were superior to the people among whom they came to dwell is shown in the character of their domestic architecture. "The buildings at Lincoln and St. Edmundsbury which still retain their title of 'Jews' Houses' were almost the first houses of stone which superseded the mere hovels of the English burghers." —Green, "Short History," p. 115. At Oxford their stone structures were so numerous and substantial, and their advance in scientific knowledge so marked, that it is probably to their presence, in some measure, that the university owed its existence. Each of the later town-halls of the borough of Oxford had been houses of Jews before their expulsion by Edward I. "Nearly all the large dwelling-houses, in fact, which were subsequently converted into academic halls, bore traces of the same origin in names, such as Moysey's Hall, Lombard's Hall, or Jacob's Hall."—Green.

bis. This scholar, who died in 1292, was unfortunately born too late. Had he lived earlier, he would have been appreciated by the keen-witted, knowledge-loving Normans. Now their influence was on the wane, and after forty years of incessant study he could say, like his great namesake, who came too early, that he found himself "unheard, forgotten, buried." Ruined and baffled in his hopes, he became a mendicant friar, and is said to have been imprisoned by his fraternity for writing his scientific works. On the other hand, Robert of Lorraine, two centuries before, was made Bishop of Hereford by William the Conqueror in consequence of his astronomical knowledge.*

Returning now to the Normans, we find that England's permanent debt to these foreigners is not confined to the building of cathedrals and the establishment of schools and universities. The cathedrals and universities still stand as their monuments, but others remain not less striking. Ranke has well said that "nowhere have more of the institutions of the Middle Ages been retained than in England."† This is due to the firm imprint which the conquerors made upon the country. They brought in, or at least firmly established, the feudal system, which took such deep root that its principles have never been eradicated from English law. Thence is derived the doctrine of primogeniture, by some regarded as a blessing, by others as the blight of modern England. It was also under their rule that Ireland was first conquered, and as an English province became the plague spot of future generations. These are questionable legacies, but, on the other hand,

* Whewell's "History of the Inductive Sciences."

† "History of England," Preface, p. vi.

Henry II., the conqueror of Ireland, established the judicial system of England, much as it exists to-day.* The same reign witnessed the regular establishment of the system of "recognition by sworn inquest," from which institution, probably a Norman importation, our modern trial by jury is lineally descended.† It was also under the foreign kings that the towns received their charters, which, borrowed from the Continent, gave them, in theory, almost an independent existence.‡ Finally came Magna Charta, wrung from the last of the foreign kings by the united efforts of the English and the Normans, which, however, did little more than to embody in written form an enumeration of rights and privileges claimed by Norman retainers under Norman dukes.

Taking it all together, this forms a very brilliant chapter in the annals of the world; but it is not strictly English history—certainly the Anglo-Saxons have but a slight connection with it, except in helping to wrest Magna Charta from a king whose successors regularly violated its provisions.§ As Macaulay has well pointed out,‖ the Normans who accomplished such wonderful results were Frenchmen transplanted into England, and Englishmen have little lot or share in the glory of their achievements. For four generations their kings were

---

* Ranke, i. 38.

† Taswell-Langmead's "Engl. Const. Hist.," pp. 160, 161.

‡ The towns like London, Norwich, etc., were filled with French and Flemish traders who followed in the wake of the Conqueror. Green.

§ Before the close of the Middle Ages the confirmation of Magna Charta was demanded and conceded no less than thirty-eight times. Gneist, i. 311.

‖ "Hist. of England," i. 13, 14, 15.

mostly born in France, and passed the larger portion of their time upon the Continent. It was only when King John was driven out of Normandy that English history can be said to begin again.

Still, it should be borne in mind that even in this latter period the Norman influence continued long after the death of John and the separation of England from the Continent. John died in 1216, but it was not until a century and a half later that the French language gave way to the returning English, showing that the Normans had been substantially absorbed. About 1350, boys at school began to translate Latin into English. In 1356, the earliest English book of mark was written, the Travels of Sir John Mandeville. In 1362, the statute was passed which required law proceedings to be conducted in English instead of French; and about 1383, Wyclif made his translation of the Bible.* During the continuance of the Norman or Continental influence, after the separation from France, we are traversing a lofty table-land stretching out beyond the mountain-top which we ascended under Norman rule. One or two landmarks on this table-land are deserving of attention before we descend into the valley of real English history, when the races had become amalgamated.

The thirteenth century saw the first organization of the English Parliament. There had been previously

---

* Hallam, "Literature of Europe," i. 37. Morley calls Mandeville "our first prose writer in formed English."—"English Writers from the Conquest to Chaucer," by Henry Morley, i. 750. The Parliament of 1365 opened with a speech in English, and was probably also dismissed by Edward III. in English. Stubbs, iii. 478; Gneist, ii. 20.

a Great Council, composed of the leading nobles and ecclesiastics, but nothing was known of any assemblage of representatives from the commons until 1265.* In that year, Earl Simon de Montfort, a Frenchman, summoned two citizens from every borough to attend the Parliament which he called while fighting Henry III.† This assembly amounted to nothing except as a suggestion for the future. But Edward I. called a Parliament in 1295, where, for the first time in English history, burgesses from every city, borough, and leading town within the kingdom came to sit with the bishops, knights, nobles, and barons of the Great Council.‡

---

* About 1164 we learn of the first assemblage of the important nobles and prelates to consider public questions, but these were of an ecclesiastical nature. Gneist, i. 287. They met, however, only to advise the sovereign, and not as a legislative body. Idem, p. 292. "In scarcely any other European country did the parliamentary constitution have such a slow and difficult birth as in England," p. 312. See as to the ancient and now exploded fictions about the Saxon Witenagemôte as the parent of the English Parliament, p. 103.

† Gneist, i. 330. Guizot calls him "the founder of representative government in England."

‡ The system of borough representation was no invention of the English. Edward had very intimate relations with the Netherlands. In 1281, as I have shown in a former chapter, p. 152, he made a treaty of peace with the Count of Holland, which was guaranteed by the towns. Davies's "Holland," i. 83; Motley's "Dutch Republic," i. 37. In Holland, deputies from the towns met with the nobles and clergy to vote supplies. This was all that Edward desired from his Parliament, and for a long time the representatives from the English boroughs came very reluctantly when summoned. Green's "Short History," p. 199. The date of the division of Parliament into two houses is uncertain; it took place some time before the middle of the fourteenth century. Taswell-Langmead's "Const. Hist. of England," p. 262; Gneist, ii. 27. The system of borough representation did not originate, however, in the Netherlands. We find it

In 1282, Edward I. conquers Wales, and makes it a permanent part of the British Empire. In 1296, he thought that he had done the same with Scotland, but there England met a different foe. The battle of Bannockburn, twenty years later, gave Scotland her independence forever. The same reign witnessed the death of Roger Bacon (who passed away forgotten and unknown), the culmination of Christian architecture,* and the expulsion of the Jews from England.†

If England suffered from the expulsion of her Jews, their place was, in part at least, taken by another race, who had also been encouraged by the Norman rulers. William the Conqueror brought over a number of weavers from Flanders, who founded the prosperity of Norwich. Nearly three hundred years later Edward III. embraced the scheme of colonization with greater vigor, and invited over a number of skilled Flemish artisans, who settled principally in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex counties. Their direct influence was not great, for Eng-

---

in Spain, where from the earliest day the towns of Aragon and Castile sent deputies to the Cortes. Robertson's "Charles V." (Am. ed. 1770), i. 120–123. This was at a date long before the Norman Conquest. The very name "Parliamentum" had been used in France for over a century before its appearance in England. Gneist, i. 319.

* Green's "Short History," p. 221.

† The Norman kings had earnestly and successfully protected the Jews; but by the time of Edward, the hatred of them by the people had gained the upper-hand. Year after year their privileges as human beings had been curtailed, till, nothing remaining but life, at length, in 1290, the whole race was banished from the kingdom, and no member of it permitted to return until the time of Cromwell. Sixteen thousand, despoiled of their property, left England; but only a few reached the shores of France, almost all of the refugees being wrecked or murdered by the English sailors. Green.

land was to do little at manufacturing for many a long year; but when we come to trace the rise of Puritanism, we shall find that wherever the Flemish or Dutch artisans had settled there was a stronghold of the Reformation.

It took about three centuries, if we can judge from the test of language, for the absorption of the keen-witted Normans, with their love of art, devotion to learning, and talent for founding institutions, into the body of the Anglo-Saxons, who were in the proportion of about forty to one.* The result was the Englishmen, whose history carries us down into a dark and dreary valley, which stretches out with little change until we reach the middle of the Elizabethan age.

On the dividing line between the England of the Normans and the England of the English stands Chaucer, almost the last beacon light of foreign influence, and the first poet of English speech. Born somewhere about 1335, the son of a vintner, we find him from an early day in close relations with the court. Marrying one of the maids of honor, he becomes brother-in-law to John

* "Early in the fourteenth century the amalgamation of the two races was all but complete."—Macaulay, "Hist. of England," i. 16. German historians, with a very natural inclination to magnify the Saxon influence, assign an earlier date. See Gneist, i. 297; but see also ii. 20, regarding the growing use of the English language as proof of the growing influence of the Commons. This does not appear until about three centuries after the Conquest. In this connection, it may be noticed that English writers, in order to show how thoroughly the Celts of Britain had been exterminated or driven out by the Anglo-Saxons, invariably point to the introduction of the language of the conquerors as one of their strongest arguments. The argument is a good one, and it applies with equal force to the absorption of the Normans, showing when the process was completed.

of Gaunt, the famous Duke of Lancaster. Exceptionally familiar with Italian and French, he goes on government missions to Florence, Genoa, Milan, Flanders, and France. In Italy he learns to revere the memory of Dante, possibly meets Petrarch and Boccaccio, and absorbs the whole spirit of Italian life. Returning to England, in his latter days he writes poems, founded on the plan of his Italian masters, some copied almost directly from their works, but all instinct with English thought and feeling. His was the first outburst of the English poetic spirit incited by the singers of the Continent. But his song made no impression on his times: he lived in the debatable age, and was followed by no successor for nearly two centuries.

To the historian of England the century which followed the absorption of the Normans may be of interest, but for our purpose its story can be summed up in a few words; and, to do no injustice to the record, I quote from one of the latest and ablest of English popular writers: "The hundred years which follow the brief sunshine of Cressy and the 'Canterbury Tales' are years of the deepest gloom; no age of our history is so sad and sombre as the age which we traverse from the third Edward to Joan of Arc. The throb of hope and glory which pulsed at its outset through every class of English society died into inaction or despair. Material life lingered on indeed, commerce still widened, but its progress was dissociated from all the nobler elements of national well-being. The towns sank again into close oligarchies; the bondmen, struggling forward to freedom, fell back into a serfage which still leaves its trace on the soil. Literature reached its lowest ebb. The religious revival of the Lollards was trodden out in blood, while the Church shrivelled into a self-seeking secular priesthood. In the clash of civil

strife political freedom was all but extinguished, and the age which began with the Good Parliament ended with the despotism of the Tudors." *

This is the period which covers the long war with France. To those who look merely at the surface of events, it may seem strange to speak thus of an epoch of English history which witnessed the glorious victories of Poitiers and Agincourt—an epoch in which France was time and again overrun by English soldiers; in which a French king was led captive to London, and an English king was recognized at Paris as successor to the throne of France. But these were merely triumphs of English energy, courage, and generalship in the field; at last French sagacity prevailed, and the English were driven back to their island retreat. Meantime the effect of these victories upon the conquerors was much like that produced on the Spaniards, at a later day, by their conquests in the New World. No longer restrained by the firm hands of such kings as they had known under Norman rule, the English soldiers on French soil turned into mere bands of marauders. Men fought for the pillage of houses, the sack of cities, the ransom of captives. Collecting their booty, they would refuse to fight again until it was safely stored. France was desolated, but the moral injury to the English was greater than the material one to the French, for nothing is so rapidly repaired as the ravages of war. The nobles came home glutted with spoils, but unfitted for the arts of peace. In England they proved themselves as lawless and dissolute as they had been greedy and cruel abroad.† Trampling upon the rights of the common people, rebellion broke out, and the intervals between the cam-

* Green's "Short History," p. 240.

† Idem, p. 287.

paigns against France were interspersed with domestic insurrections.

Pestilence came also to add its horrors. In 1348 the Black Death first appeared in England. During its ravages in the next few years it is claimed that more than one half of the population was carried off.* As a result, labor became so scarce and wages so high that tillage of the soil was almost abandoned. The great land-owners gave up agriculture, evicted their small tenants, and turned their fields into sheep pastures, raising wool which they sent to Flanders to be manufactured. Turned adrift, moneyless and without employment, the agricultural laborer developed into the "sturdy beggar," who for two centuries was to prove the pest of England. The last step was to take away the right of suffrage from the poorer classes. Until 1430, the knights of the shire—that is, the county members of Parliament—had been elected by all the freeholders, leaseholders, and copyholders of the county, who appeared on the day of election at the sheriff's court. Now a statute was passed providing that no one should be allowed to vote unless he was the owner of land worth forty shillings a year—a sum equal to at least twenty pounds to-day—and representing a far higher proportional income at the present time.† Thus it was that early under English rule the government became, as it has since continued, one by the rich, and for the rich alone.

We need hardly ask how learning fared in such an age. In the last century of Norman influence, Oxford had numbered her students by thousands.‡ Now all

---

* Perhaps one third. Prof. Thorold Rogers, *Time*, March, 1890.

† Green's "Short History," p. 286.

‡ The statement of old writers that in the fourteenth century Ox-

this was changed. According to Wood, where before there were thousands there was now not one. This is of course an exaggeration, but the decline in numbers was very great, probably amounting to four fifths.* As a result, learning came to an almost stagnant condition. In 1443, there was not a single doctor of civil law resident at Oxford, and the degrees of the university were sold for money.† Latin was then the language of the learned, but that spoken and written in England was simply a barbarous jargon, its masters being ignorant of even the ordinary rules of grammar. As for the colleges, "Oxford Latin" became a by-word among scholars.‡

One gleam of light shines athwart the darkness of this period, but it serves only to make the darkness more intense. About 1361, Wyclif appears upon the scene: for twenty years he struggles for religious freedom; he translates the Bible into English, builds up the sect of the Lollards (mainly among the Flemish weavers of Norfolk), and dies in 1384, just in time to escape martyrdom. English writers lay much stress upon his teachings, and point to him with pardonable pride as one of the early religious reformers; so he was, but he was only a beacon light, like Bede, Roger Bacon, and Chaucer, individual examples of something great in the national character which time was to develop. The people

---

ford had thirty thousand students is now believed by no one. Lyte, in his recent work on that university, says that there were never more than four thousand, and Broderick puts the number at from two to three thousand. Lyte, p. 96; Broderick, p. 14.

* Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 147; Green.

† Lyte, pp. 314, 315.

‡ Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 84.

were not prepared for his coming, as were the Germans and Netherlanders for the advent of Luther, a century and a half later. He died, and his sect substantially died with him, for they were soon crushed out by the persecutors of the Bishops' Court. At the conclusion of the war with France, almost every vestige of his influence had disappeared. Religious enthusiasm was dead. The one belief of the time was in sorcery and magic.* We are now descending into a deep valley with great rapidity.

In 1415, the English won their famous victory at Agincourt. In 1431, they burned Joan of Arc at the stake for sorcery, in turning the tide of conquest which had been so long setting against the French. In 1451, the long war came to an end; the English were driven from the Continent, holding nothing but the city of Calais as a memento of their triumphs.† France became a mightier power than ever before, and the English nobles were left to fight among themselves.

The story of the last hundred years had been dark enough for English civilization, but that which is to follow is darker still. No page in history is more dreary than that which chronicles the Wars of the Roses, extending from 1450 to 1485. The contest was not one of principle, nothing being involved but the supremacy of faction; and it was characterized simply by treachery, selfishness, and ruthless cruelty. The old, untamed, Anglo-Saxon nature seemed to be let loose, and we have again the battles of the kites and crows. In the period which extends from the accession of Henry VI. to that of Henry VII., thirteen pitched battles were fought between Englishmen and on English soil; the crown was

* Green, p. 288.

† This was lost in the reign of Mary.

twice won and twice lost by each of the contending houses; three out of four kings died by violence; eighty persons connected with the blood royal were reckoned as having perished on the field or scaffold or by the hand of the assassin; and the great majority of the noble families became extinguished, or sank into obscurity.* The wholesale confiscations which followed the final establishment of the Tudors transferred, it is said, nearly one fifth of the land of the kingdom into the hands of the successful reigning house. As the ultimate issue of the contest, the progress of English freedom was arrested for over a hundred years.† Up to this time, even during the long war with France, although civilization was falling so rapidly behind, the forms of liberty had been preserved, and the security of the citizens so well guarded as to excite the admiration of observers like Commines, who pronounced England the best-governed country in the world.‡

But all this was passing away. Liberty in England, like that in Spain, had rested on the strength of the great barons, who, as a condition of securing their own rights, had been compelled to protect those of their humbler allies and retainers. The Wars of the Roses, in which gunpowder was first used on British soil, dealt the death-blow to everything which was beneficial in the feudal system, leaving only its withered branches still to cumber the earth. With this power gone, the greater nobles being removed by death and the lesser ones cowed and scattered; with a middle class just born, and the people as yet undreamed of; with a Church,

---

* Kirk's "Charles the Bold," ii. 29.

† Green's "Short History," p. 301.

‡ Commines wrote about 1472.

which through the Middle Ages had been the friend of freedom, now sunk into debauchery or falling into pitiable decrepitude; with manufactures almost unknown, and commerce in its infancy, nothing could be expected but the absolutism of the crown, and this came to stay, until hacked down by the rude blows of the Puritans in the days of Charles I.

It was at this time that torture was introduced as part of the regular machinery of state, not to be finally put away until after the Revolution of 1688. The privilege of self-taxation now became a delusion; for the Tudor kings, when in want of money, did not lay a formal tax, to be sure, but by forced loans simply helped themselves from the coffers of their wealthy subjects. Jury trials were turned into a farce, when the juries were always packed, and, in addition, punished if they gave a verdict against the crown. As for Parliament, it was rarely summoned, and then met only to record the decrees which riveted the fetters of tyranny.*

If liberty seemed dead under the Tudor kings, literature and learning were hardly less lifeless. This was not the fault of the age, for in the fifteenth century, and especially towards its close, the whole of the Continent of Europe was in an intellectual ferment. England alone, peaceful England, cut off from the elder civilization by the Channel, scarcely felt the movement, and was not to feel it for nearly a hundred years to come. In this connection, however, two events should be noticed, not from the importance of their immediate results, but because they form little landmarks in English history, and give promise of something better in the future.

---

* See Green for an admirable account of these features of the period from the Wars of the Roses to the accession of Elizabeth.

The first is the introduction of printing into England. In 1476, William Caxton, after an absence of thirty-five years, returned home with a priceless treasure: a printing-press, which he had learned to use while living in the Netherlands. This brought England again into some relations with the Continent, but a single fact will show how slight was its effect upon the general public. In the thirty years which succeeded the setting-up of Caxton's press at Westminster, from ten to fifteen thousand editions of books and pamphlets were printed in Europe; but of all this number only one hundred and forty-one appeared in England.* The quality, too, was on a par with the quantity. The first book which issued from the German press was the Bible. Caxton's first production was a little work on the Game of Chess, or perhaps one on the Siege of Troy. Well may Hallam say, reviewing them all, that his publications "indicate, on the whole, but a low state of knowledge in England."† These simple facts should be borne in mind when we read the glowing sentences in which historians have described the revival of learning. There was a glorious revival about this time, but until the latter days of Elizabeth England

---

* Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 192.

† Hallam, i. 135. Strype, in his "Ecclesiastical Memorials," in giving the important events of the year 1551, throws considerable light on the small advance made by English printers even at that time. He says: "Let me add here, now we are upon the mention of books printed, that in April this year, two foreign printers—the one an Italian, the other a Dutchman—had privileges granted them to print certain books, which it seems our English printers had not skill or learning enough to do." The Italian printed the Digests and Pandects of the Roman Civil Law; the Dutchman printed a Herbal compiled by William Turner, Doctor in Physic. Strype, ii. 317.

had very little share in it; the mass of her people could not read, and hence had no need of books. What the upper classes read, I shall describe hereafter.

The second event was the gathering at Oxford, in the latter part of the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth century, of a little band of scholars, called the Oxford Reformers. The band was made up of Grocyn, Linacre, and Colet—all of whom had been students in Italy—with Thomas More and a few others, who, incited by the scholars of the Continent, began the study of classical literature. To them came Erasmus for the study of Greek under Grocyn, being too poor to go to Italy. A mere boy, full of enthusiasm and ignorant of Italian culture, the new-comer, shortly after his arrival, wrote a letter praising in high terms the learning which he found at Oxford. This letter has been the delight of almost every English author who has written of this period;* but Hallam, the cold, sober-minded historian, pricks the bubble. He points out that Erasmus was writing to an English friend, that he was always given to flattery, and concludes that the English cannot in conscience take his praises to themselves.†

---

* See extracts in Green's "Short History," p. 317.

† "The scholars were few, and not more than three or four could be found, or at least now mentioned, who had any tincture of Greek —Grocyn, Linacre, William Latimer, who, though an excellent scholar, never published anything, and More, who had learned at Oxford under Grocyn."—Hallam's "Literature of Europe," i. 185. Grocyn, after returning from Italy, communicated his acquisitions "chiefly to deaf ears." Idem, p. 184; see also p. 219 as to the "panegyrical humor" of Erasmus. In 1510, More succeeded in again bringing Erasmus over to England to teach Greek at Cambridge. "The students," says Hallam, "were too poor to pay him anything, and his instruction was confined to the grammar. In the same year Colet,

The fact is that the group of English scholars was very small, and the acquirements of its members were very limited. Green claims More alone as entitled to rank among the great classical scholars of the age, and even of him Hallam remarks that he had a very ingenious but not a profound mind.*

It must be remembered that at this time the universities on the Continent contained a large number of men learned not only in Greek, but in Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic as well. Peter Albinus, historiographer of Saxony, who died in 1598, wrote a pamphlet on "Foreign Languages and Unknown Islands," in which he enumerates the names and acquisitions of a number of these early scholars, some of whom were skilled in fifteen languages, a knowledge of six or seven being quite common. He says that, although our ancestors were satisfied with the Latin, a man is not now regarded, even by the vulgar, as plausibly learned who is not master of Greek or Hebrew at least, in addition, of course, to Latin, the universal language. Never at any period since the Christian era had there been so many in Europe skilled in Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek literature as there were in that day within the universities of Germany, France, Italy, and

---

Dean of St. Paul's, founded there a school, and published a Latin grammar. Five or six little works of this kind had already appeared in England. These trifling things are mentioned to let the reader take notice that there is nothing more worthy to be named. . . . The difference in point of learning between Italy and England was at least that of a century; that is, the former was more advanced in knowledge of ancient literature in 1400 than the latter was in 1500."—Hallam, i. 205. Very mildly he concludes: "In the spirit of truth, we cannot quite take to ourselves the compliment of Erasmus."—Idem, p. 219.

* Hallam, i. 221.

Spain.* In 1517, Cardinal Ximenes published in Spain his famous polyglot Bible, in Hebrew, Greek, Chaldee, and Latin. In 1516, Justinian, Bishop of Nebbio, in Corsica, published a psalter in Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Chaldee, and Latin.† These illustrations only suggest the work going on in the foreign universities when the English were beginning to study the Greek grammar and publish little elementary books on Latin.

Such as they were, however, these disciples of the New Learning form almost the last beacon lights in English literary history, until we come to Spenser, Shakespeare, Hooker, and Bacon. They brought classical literature to the universities, and it lived there for a time a sickly life; but the soil was unfruitful, the climate ungenial, and in a few years it withered away and died. Their religious teachings were equally unfitted for the age and country. Luther came preaching to men and not to scholars, thundering against the abuses of the Church; but he awakened no echo among these students.‡ They founded a grammar school or two, and probably exerted some influence on the middle stratum of society, but on the surface they hardly raised a ripple.§

Upon England the Reformation, for many years, pro-

---

* See translation of this rare pamphlet by Edmund Goldsmid, Edinburgh, 1884. Privately printed.

† Idem.

‡ Green, p. 31.

§ In this connection we may also profitably notice a little Protestant movement at Oxford which occurred in 1527. It was led by Thomas Garret, a fellow of Magdalen College. The students affected by it read the New Testament, Luther's tracts, and like heretical works. Finally they were detected, placed in confinement, and all except one, who died in prison, retracted. Oxford was purged of heresy. Froude, ii. 56, 76.

duced but a faint impression. The people, to be sure, had their religion changed for them, from time to time, but such transformations signified nothing. The first one was imposed by Henry VIII. in 1531. Finding that he could obtain his divorce in no other way, he deposed the pope from the headship of the English Church and assumed the place himself. The common people acquiesced, for they knew and cared little about such questions, except in their political bearings. The nobles were won over by an arrangement which made the restoration of the old relations with Rome almost impossible. The monastic orders in England, as upon the Continent, had absorbed a large portion of the land.* Henry abolished the monasteries, confiscated their property, and divided it largely among his courtiers. The men thus enriched had no love for Protestantism, but never would accede to any legislation which looked towards a surrender of their plunder.

In the end, the separation from Rome was to prove a great blessing; but at the outset only evil results seemed to follow. The ecclesiastics, with all their faults, had been at least liberal and indulgent landlords. It has been estimated that they demanded from their tenants not more than a tenth of the rental value of their lands. Under such a system the farmer was almost a freeholder. The suppression of the monasteries brought this to an end. Their estates passed into the hands of men who exacted the last penny of rent. It was as yet more profitable to raise wool than grain, and so farms were now given up in greater numbers, the buildings were torn down, and the tenants turned adrift to prey upon the public. We can trace the effects of

* Estimated at one fifth. Gneist, ii. 159.

this change in successive acts of Parliament passed for the repression of pauperism, under which the beggar for the first offence was to be whipped, for the second to have his ears slit or bored with a red-hot iron, and for the third to be put to death as a felon. A later act provided that all vagrants should be apprehended and treated as slaves. Formed into bands, the "sturdy beggars" roamed over the country, always ready for a civil commotion, of which they incited several, and everywhere making life and property insecure.*

But this was not the worst immediate result of the separation from Rome. The movement, it must be borne in mind, was not a religious nor a theological, but almost entirely a secular one. During the reign of Henry the Reformer the same hurdle bore to the stake three men who denied the king's spiritual supremacy—the new English doctrine—and three others who questioned the doctrine of transubstantiation, the leading tenet of the Church of Rome.† No change of belief was proposed, only a change of pope. However, the mode in which this change was accomplished, and the object for which it was brought about, were disastrous

* Harrison says that during the reign of Henry VIII. seventy-two thousand persons were executed in England for crimes against the person and property. During about the same period, according to the estimate of William of Orange, over fifty thousand were executed in the Netherlands for heresy. Both estimates, however, may be exaggerated.

† Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 93. See Gneist, ii. 157, for an account of the difference between the Reformation upon the Continent and that in England. Upon the Continent it was the result of an intellectual belief in the errors of the Romish Church. In England, it gained its power among the masses from a political desire for national independence, by throwing off the yoke of a foreign ecclesiastical ruler. The intellectual and religious movement was delayed in England for many years.

enough to the cause of religion. In the suppression of the monasteries every indignity was offered to objects which the people looked up to with reverent awe. The Bible was translated into the vulgar tongue, but only, to use the words of Henry himself, to be "disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every tavern and alehouse" in the land, so that he soon suppressed its general reading. The priests, terrorized by the crown, lost all independence, and thought only of saving their livings by the most abject servility.

The effect of this religious upheaval on the public at large was bad enough during the reign of Henry; still, he tried to check the excesses of the fanatics, and preserved some respect for outward religious forms. Upon his death, however, the revolution went still further. The uncle of the young king, who assumed the office of Protector, had little religion, but thought it to his advantage to ally himself with the more violent of the Reformers. The precocious Edward was doubtless sincere in his Protestantism, and his sincerity aided the work of the Protector. The mass was abolished, the altars were torn down, all pictures and images removed from the churches; the doctrine of transubstantiation was repudiated, the confessional abolished, and priests were permitted to marry. With these violent changes, the old religion was gone, but unfortunately nothing was substituted in its place. We have seen that in the Netherlands the new religion naturally replaced the old, the process being a slow and silent one, brought about by placing the Bible in the hands of a people all of whom could read. The mass of the English population were too ignorant to dispense at once with the sensuous element in their religion, and utterly unfitted to accept the doctrines of the Reformation, even had

these doctrines been brought to their attention.* Deprived of the old system, which at least inculcated some morality, and incapable of comprehending the new teachings, which made faith of paramount importance, the result followed which may be looked for whenever all religious restraints are thrown aside.

The English people were low enough before, but now a sudden lurch seemed to plunge them into still lower depths. With every barrier broken down, the nation entered on a carnival of irreligion and immorality. The patron of a benefice no longer made a distinction between a clergyman and a layman. He appointed as rector of a parish, himself, his steward, his huntsman, or his gamekeeper, and then pocketed the stipend.† Learning, too, naturally declined, the attendance at the universities falling off to almost nothing, the libraries being destroyed or scattered, and costly books burned or chopped up with axes.‡ One transaction shows better, perhaps, than anything else the iconoclastic character of the age. The Duke of Somerset, the Protector, having pulled down some churches in order to erect Somerset House with the materials, next projected the demolition of Westminster Abbey for the same purpose.

---

* I have shown in a previous chapter that it was not until 1538 that any translation of the Bible was printed in English.

† "The cathedrals and churches of London became the chosen scenes of riot and profanation. St. Paul's was the stock-exchange of the day, where the merchants of the city met for business, and the lounge where the young gallants gambled, fought, and killed each other. They rode their horses through the aisles and stabled them among the monuments."—Froude, v. 256.

‡ Hallam's "Literature of Europe," ii. 35. "The divinity schools were planted with cabbages, and the Oxford laundresses dried clothes in the schools of arts."—Froude.

From this act of vandalism he was turned aside only by a grant from the chapter of some of its estates.*

The public service also felt the evil influence. Corruption everywhere prevailed. Every official, from the highest to the lowest, plundered the treasury. In seventeen years the expenses of government increased more than fourfold, and, ignorant of the first principles of political economy, the crown attempted to make money by debasing the currency.† Private business and morality likewise naturally suffered. The English had manufactured some coarse woollen cloth which had acquired a good reputation on the Continent. Now came news that huge bales of it were lying on the wharves at Antwerp without a purchaser "through the naughtiness of the making," and, "yet more shameful, that woollens, fraudulent in make, weight, and size, were exposed in the place of St. Mark with the brand of the Senate upon them, as evidence of the decay of English honesty with the decay of English faith."‡

One creditable thing was accomplished by the Reformers of the time of Edward. They founded eighteen grammar schools and some hospitals, appropriating for the endowment of them all land worth twelve hundred pounds a year, equal perhaps to as many thousand pounds to-day.§ As these same men granted to themselves crown lands to the value of a million and a half, equal to fifteen or twenty million pounds in modern

---

* Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 105. These men, it must be remembered, were not Puritans, but the founders of the Church of England.

† Froude, v. 154, 266, etc.

‡ Idem, v. 259. For a full account of the corruption and demoralization of this time, see Strype's "Ecclesiastical Memorials," vol. ii. chaps. xxiii–xxiv.

§ Idem, v. 431.

money,* and as they and their predecessors had largely absorbed the property of the monasteries and other clerical institutions, this contribution to the cause of humanity and learning was hardly lavish enough to warrant the praise of historians, who call it a "noble measure," throwing a lustre over the name of Edward.† But let us be thankful for even the eighteen grammar schools, and their sixty or seventy pounds a year. Their foundation was unique. The government did nothing more of the kind for three centuries; and even these few schools bore fruit in time.

With the accession of Queen Mary, in 1553, there came a short and terrible reaction, showing how little the people at large cared about religious matters. The changes during the reign of Edward had been made by an almost unanimous Parliament, now the House of Lords, without a dissentient voice, and the House of Commons, by a vote of three hundred and fifty-eight, to two, decided to return to the Romish faith.‡ The mass was restored, the new prayer-book set aside, the

---

* Froude; Green; Gneist, ii. 162. † Green.

‡ Froude, vi. 268. Speaking of these bewildering transformation scenes, unknown in other lands, the Venetian ambassador resident at London reported to his government in 1557: "The example and authority of the sovereign are everything with the people of this country in matters of faith. As he believes, they believe. Judaism or Mahometanism—it is all one to them. They conform themselves easily to his will, at least so far as the outward show is concerned; and most easily of all where it concurs with their own pleasure and profit." Of the English Parliament he adds: "They are rarely summoned except to save the king trouble, or to afford a cloak to his designs. No one ventures to resist the regal will, servile the members come there and servile they remain."—Prescott's "Philip II.," i. 77, 79.

married priests were driven from their livings, and the old system was re-established, with one notable exception: Parliament would not consent to giving up a single acre of the church property which its own members had acquired. For forms of religion they cared nothing, and so were ready enough to humor their monarch; but this was a practical question in which there was no room for sentiment.

In 1554, Mary marries Philip of Spain. Some of her nobles at first objected to the match, but their consent was obtained through bribes furnished by Philip's father.* The future King of Spain was anxious to obtain the alliance of England, with her two or three million inhabitants, all of whose able-bodied men were soldiers by birthright; but he went to England for his bride with little apparent pleasure. The Spanish minister advised him to wear a shirt of mail under his doublet, and to bring his own cook, for fear of being poisoned.† Arriving in the country, his luggage was plundered, and the property stolen could not be recovered, nor the thieves detected.‡

He remained in England just long enough to discover that his marriage was a barren one. His wife tried to cheer him by burning some heretics, against which act his father's minister protested, but only on the ground of policy.§ But even this could not detain him. It is charitable to believe that his departure drove Mary into

* Froude, vi. 188. † Idem, vi. 222. ‡ Idem, vi. 242.

§ Idem, vi. 211, 212. This same faithful minister pointed out to Philip, who wished to leave England after six weeks, that however much his wife might be deficient in "refinement," she was infinitely virtuous, which she certainly was. Froude, vi. 311. "Politesse" is the French word used by the minister, the meaning of which the English historian hardly gives by translating it "agreeability."

madness. In the three years thereafter she earned the title of the "Bloody" queen by the atrocities which she committed in the name of the Catholic religion. Archbishop and bishop, priest and layman, women, children, and babes just born, all perished in the flames; and yet the people made no sign. The tale of the Martyrs is a fit close to the roll of horror which begins with the Wars of the Roses. Truly the valley into which we have descended is very deep and dark.

"Never," says Green, "had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb than at the moment when Elizabeth mounted the throne." But it was not alone the fortunes of the State which had gone down. Society was demoralized, and remained so during her entire reign, in some respects becoming worse instead of better. Still, it is hardly fair to charge these results, as some would do, to the religious teachings of the Reformers. We see in modern times that some savage nations shrivel up morally before our civilization, but do not attribute this calamity to the teachings of Christianity. A rude people will generally copy the vices of their superiors in education long before they imitate the virtues. This was the case with the English when first brought into contact with the intellectual movement upon the Continent, of which the Reformation was only the religious feature, and among them, too, the Reformation in time did good work.

But, however all this may be, and whatever the causes which brought about its moral and social condition, we have ample material for a study in its every aspect of the England of Elizabeth, which gave birth to English and American Puritanism.

CHAPTER VI

ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

PRIVATE LIFE, EDUCATION, RELIGION, AND MORALS

If a person acquainted with the appearance of the country to-day could be carried back to the England of three centuries ago, he would find himself well-nigh a stranger in a strange land. Almost nothing before him would appear familiar. We see now highly cultivated fields, trim hedges, fat cattle, smooth hard roads, neat cottages, and lordly mansions; not to mention the vast manufactories which have revolutionized the North. When Elizabeth ascended the throne, only about one fourth of the arable land was under cultivation, and that of the rudest character; the remainder was still covered with fen and forest, or was devoted to the pasturing of sheep. Through the forest the red deer wandered in thousands, while the wolf, the wild cat, the wild bull, and the wild boar were not uncommon.* None of the hedges which now form so charming a feature of the landscape then lined the roads. The cattle in the fields and the horses on the highway were small and of little value.

---

* The German traveller Hentzner, who visited England in 1598, saw a wild wolf which had been captured there. Macaulay says that the last one on the island was slain in the reign of Charles II. He also tells us that the wild bull and the wild cat were found in the forest in 1685. "History of England," chap. iii.

In fact, England, which is now an agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing, was then largely a pastoral land. Almost the sole industry of the people in the rural districts was the raising of sheep and cattle. Time and again Parliament had passed laws to check the devotion to this one pursuit, which was considered injurious to the general welfare; but all in vain. The advance of the world in wealth created more and more of a demand for woven fabrics. The English wool was of a superior quality, and for many years had commanded high prices in the Netherlands. Under such conditions legislation could do nothing. Individual flocks had numbered as high as twenty thousand sheep; a law passed in the reign of Henry VIII. limited them to two thousand, but this meant only a subdivision and fictitious transfers. So long as it was profitable wool-raising was continued.

During the reign of Elizabeth there was a vast increase in the commerce and manufactures of the Netherlands. This raised still further the price of English wool, pouring a constant stream of wealth into the country. In addition, the English increased their own manufactures of coarse woollen cloth, and this added to the general disturbance of industrial conditions which had begun many years before. More land was turned into pasturage, more small farms were given up; men with newly-acquired wealth developed a mania for acquiring land and becoming country gentlemen; rents were raised enormously; the dispossessed tenants and unemployed farm laborers flocked into the towns; while the new landlords cultivated grain only for their own consumption, selling their wool to the manufacturers, and exporting wool and cheese to the Continent.

In time, under a Netherland influence which will be

described hereafter, all kinds of manufactures were introduced, England's commerce was developed, and, with markets at home and abroad for the general produce of the farm, scientific agriculture finally came in, and the laborer again found employment on the land. But these results came about long after Elizabeth had passed away. Her reign was a period of social disturbance, caused largely by industrial transition, in which the rich became richer and the poor poorer. This is one of the central facts, unnoticed by many writers, which should always be kept in mind by any one who would understand the history of this era.*

The first thing which struck the Spaniards who accompanied Philip II. on his nuptial tour, in 1554, was the appearance of the English dwellings. These, they said, were built of "sticks and dirt." This description might seem inspired by ill-humor, or one might think it applicable only to the hovels of the very poor, but for the survival of some of the residences of the time. They are constructed of a timber frame filled in with a

---

* See Froude, *passim*, and more particularly "Society in the Elizabethan Age," by Hubert Hall, of H. M. Public Record Office (London, 1886), a work the material for which was gathered from official documents, many of which are printed in the appendix, supplementing those given by Froude and Strype. I shall refer to it frequently hereafter, and take this opportunity to make my acknowledgments to the author for his valuable contribution to the social history of this period. Prof. Thorold Rogers expresses the opinion that the condition of the English working classes was more miserable during the larger part of the seventeenth century than at any other period in their history, except that of the Napoleonic wars. See *Time*, March, 1890. This is probably true of the agricultural laborer, whose condition had been getting worse and worse from the beginning of the sixteenth century.

coarse mortar which looks like mud. As probably only the best ones have come down to us, common clay may have been used in the majority. One of these houses, now standing in Stratford, shows that such structures were not the residences of the poor alone. It was occupied by John Shakespeare when he was wealthy and filling the highest municipal office in his town. In 1876, an American scholar, an enthusiastic student of Shakespeare, and one of the prominent editors of his works, went to England for the first time. Stratford was of course his Mecca. The house in which the poet was probably born, and in which he certainly passed his boyhood, he found had been externally rejuvenated and its identity destroyed. Within, however, it remained unchanged. Let me quote the words which summed up his impressions of the mansion which housed the High-bailiff, or Mayor, of Stratford:

"My heart sank within me as I looked around upon the rude, mean dwelling-place of him who had filled the world with the splendor of his imaginings. It is called a house, and any building intended for a dwelling-place is a house; but the interior of this one is hardly that of a rustic cottage: it is almost that of a hovel—poverty-stricken, squalid, kennel-like—a house so cheerless and comfortless I had not seen in rural England. The poorest, meanest farm-house that I had ever entered in New England or on Long Island was a more cheerful habitation. And amid these sordid surroundings William Shakespeare grew to early manhood." * With illusion

* "England Without and Within," Richard Grant White, p. 526. The home of Anne Hathaway is likewise standing. Her family was superior socially to that of her husband's. This dwelling our author also visited, and of it remarks: "There is little to be said about

dispelled, this pilgrim regretted that he had gone to Stratford.

But why should the student feel such regret as this? Certainly the works of the world's dramatist can only be appreciated when we understand the character of his surroundings. Seeing the age in which he lived in its true light, his dramas put on a new significance, holding, in very truth, "the mirror up to nature." It was a rude world which he depicted, full of passionate hot blood, boiling over in all forms of violence, but lighted up with the glory which comes but once, when a great people are awakening into life. It is absurd to think of the author of these plays as a rude, unlettered peasant boy going up to London to seek his fortune. His father, although he lived in what seems to some visitors a hovel-like structure, because so devoid of appliances for comfort, occupied this house when chief magistrate of the town of Stratford.* His residence seems very mean when compared with the stone dwellings of the same date in the cities of the Netherlands, and to modern eyes may appear a poverty-stricken habitation; but compare it with the theatre in which the plays of his son were given to the world, and we find the two in keeping.

In 1576, the first theatre was opened in London. It was situated in Blackfriars, and was erected by the ser-

---

this house, which is merely a thatched cottage of the same grade as the house in Henley Street; in its original condition a picturesque object in the landscape, but the lowliest sort of human habitation." —Idem, p. 529. See White's "Shakespeare" for his preconceived idea of the poet's home obtained from books alone.

* The house in Henley Street is at present sixty-five feet long and twenty-one feet deep, with an extension or addition on the rear, about twenty feet square. (Memorandum of survey kindly sent me by the curator).

vants of the Earl of Leicester. In 1594, the company at this playhouse, in which William Shakespeare was a partner as well as an actor, built their new theatre, the famous Globe. Constructed of wood, hexagonal in shape, it was surrounded by a muddy ditch, and surmounted by a red flag, which was elevated into place at three o'clock in the afternoon, when the performance began. Within, the whole space was open to the elements, except that the stage was covered with a thatched roof. Here the gallants sat on stools among the actors, or lay on the rush-strewn floor, eating, drinking, playing cards, and smoking the tobacco which Raleigh had just made fashionable. Below, in the pit—and the word meant something then — were gathered the common people, standing up, taking the rain when it fell, drinking beer, and, as it operated, using a great upturned barrel which was set in the ground to receive their contributions. When the smell became too strong, a cry arose, "Burn the juniper," and the air was filled with its heavy smoke. On the stage, a huge scroll attached to a post told in large letters the location of the scene; a bunch of flowers indicated a garden; three or four supernumeraries with swords and bucklers represented an army, and the rolling of a drum a pitched battle.*

Certainly there is as great a contrast between such a theatre as this and the modern palace of the drama as appears between the house of Shakespeare's father in

---

* Sir Philip Sidney's "Defence of Poesy;" Taine's "English Literature;" Green; Drake's "Shakespeare;" Chambers's "Cyclopædia of English Literature," etc. Movable scenery was first introduced after the Restoration, and at the same time women began to take the female parts, which before that date had been represented by boys.

Stratford and the residence of the poet-laureate of England, or that of a French dramatist like Hugo, Dumas, or Sardou. The audience at the Globe had the imaginations of children, who from a few chairs will construct you a steamship or a railroad train, and transport you in a moment to any quarter of the universe. The poorer the children, the more they will delight in the society of imaginary princes, and revel in scenes of fictitious splendor. The poet who ministered to this audience was himself "the very age and body of the time."

But we have much more than the house in Stratford to reveal the characters of the dwellings of this period. Harrison, writing in 1580, tells us that in the early days of Elizabeth the mansion-houses of the country gentlemen were little better than cottages, except in size, being thatched buildings, covered on the outside with the coarsest clay, and lighted only by lattices. Outside of London, chimneys were very rare; the smoke of the open fire being allowed to escape as it might, either through the unglazed windows or by an aperture in the roof.*

The interior of these dwellings was equally unpreten-

---

* Harrison's account of England, prefixed to Holinshed's "Chronicles." Chimneys were not used in the farm-houses of Cheshire until about 1616. Whitaker's "Craven," quoted by Hallam, "Middle Ages," chap. ix. part ii. "It is an error," says Hallam, "to suppose that the English gentry were lodged in stately or even well-sized houses. Generally speaking, their dwellings were almost as inferior to those of their descendants in capacity as they were in convenience. The usual arrangement consisted of an entrance passage running through the house, with a hall on one side, a parlor beyond, and one or two chambers above, and on the opposite side a kitchen, pantry, and other offices. Such was the ordinary manor-house of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries."—Idem.

tious. A gentleman's house containing three or four beds was extraordinarily well provided; few probably had more than two. The walls were bare, not even being plastered. Glass windows, when they existed, were looked upon as movable furniture. Carpets were almost unknown, and chairs seem to have been a rarity. An inventory of the furniture in Skipton Castle, which belonged to the Earl of Cumberland and was one of the most splendid mansions of the North, was made in 1572. It shows that there were not more than seven or eight beds in the castle, and that none of the chambers had chairs, window glass, or carpets.* Among the better class of farmers, the men slept on straw, with a good round log for a bolster, pillows being thought meet only for women in childbirth. The platters from which they ate were made of wood, and their spoons of the same material.

As wealth increased, during the reign of Elizabeth, many improvements became apparent. The ancient timber mansions of the gentry were now covered with plaster, "which," says Harrison, "beside the delectable whitenesse of the stuffe itselfe, is laied on so even and smoothlie, as nothing in my judgment can be done with more exactnesse." † The new mansions were commonly of brick or stone, larger and more convenient. The walls were hung with tapestry or sealed with oak, and here and there stoves were introduced. The more general use of glass for windows came also to give a comfort before unknown.‡ The farmers, too, in the regions near

---

* Hallam's "Middle Ages."

† Tacitus describes the Germans as living in houses constructed of rough timber, filled in with shining clay. "Germania," § 16.

‡ Harrison.

the capital, felt the improvement. Their wooden dishes were replaced with pewter, added to which was an occasional piece of silver; feather beds became common, and the multitude of chimneys newly erected excited the admiration of the old inhabitants.

Above the mansions of the gentry stood the castles of the great nobles, which, though few in number, were in some cases of imposing dimensions. It is from the romantic description of some of these exceptional structures that many persons have formed their impressions of the general magnificence of the age. Fortunately we have some unquestionable evidence relating to the furniture, conveniences, and modes of life in several of these dwellings of the great, which may serve to modify such impressions. Henry Percy, fifth Earl of Northumberland, who died in 1527, was one of England's most magnificent nobles. When the Princess Margaret, in 1503, married James IV. of Scotland, he was commissioned to escort the bride to the border, and did so with a train which, according to the chroniclers of the time, was royal in its splendor. He had two lordly castles in Yorkshire, where he entertained on an average fifty-seven guests a day. His regular household numbered one hundred and fifty-six, which included eleven priests, headed by a canon. For the regulation of this enormous establishment a most elaborate system was adopted and embodied in a "Household Book," which provided in advance for every detail of the daily life, the duties of each servant, the supplies for each department, and even the bill of fare for the whole year.

This book, as kept for 1512, is still in existence, and throws a world of light on the condition of the highest classes in England, in at least the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and in the rural districts it did not

change much for very many years. In the first place, when the family moved from one castle to another they took all their furniture with them—a matter, however, of no great difficulty, for it was not bulky. There seem to have been no glass windows in either castle. The dishes in common use were made of wood, but for extraordinary occasions pewter ones were hired. The household's supply of linen consisted of nine table-cloths, "eight for my lord's table, and one for that of the knights." The whole allowance for the year's washing amounted to forty shillings, and that was mainly expended on the linen in the chapel. This was not extravagant, but was large enough, in view of the fact that no sheets or pillow-cases were used, and probably none of the family wore underclothes, at least not any that ever went to the laundry.* This, to be sure, was in 1512; but I have already shown what Skipton Castle, the superb seat of the Earl of Cumberland, was in 1572. Viewing the accommodations in such mansions as these, Æneas Sylvius, the Italian traveller, remarked long before that the kings of Scotland would rejoice to be as well lodged as the second class of citizens at Nuremberg.†

Such, in the main, when Elizabeth ascended the throne, were the dwellings and their accommodations in the rural part of England, which then contained a much larger

* "The Northumberland Household Book," Preface, etc.

† The new castles and baronial halls, which were erected in considerable numbers during the reign of Elizabeth, were of a different character from their predecessors, being much more fitted for comfort. The improvement here, however, as in every other direction, was due to a foreign influence, which in this case came largely from Italy, although, as I shall show hereafter, much was owing to the Netherlands. As to the Italian influence, see "Architecture of the Renaissance in England," by J. Alfred Gotch, 1891.

proportion of the inhabitants than at present. The whole population of the country probably numbered less than three millions, of whom, perhaps, a hundred thousand lived in London, and there was no other town of any great size.* London itself, about the middle of the reign of Elizabeth, consisted of a coil of narrow, tortuous, unseemly streets, each with a black, noisome rivulet running through its centre, and with rows of three-storied, leaden-roofed houses, built of timber-work, filled in with lime, with many gables, and with the upper stories overhanging and darkening the basements.† These houses were stately, compared with those in the country, but they were not magnificent.

But outside the city proper, especially along the single street which led by the river's strand to Westminster, were some newer mansions of a different character. These belonged to the nobles, who, greatly to the sorrow of their staid and conservative brethren, now flocked to court to enjoy the pleasures of the town, and pick up some of the fat contracts and lucrative monopolies which were showered on the royal favorites. Some few of these men lived in great splendor; they had costly plate, superb tapestries, and magnificent pieces of furniture, gathered from every quarter of the globe, largely by the pirates with whom they were often associated in partnership. But this was, in the main, a barbaric splen-

---

* In 1631, in the reign of Charles I., London had by actual count a little over 130,000 inhabitants. See article by Prof. Thorold Rogers in *Time* for March, 1890.

† Motley's "United Netherlands," i. 311. In the reign of James I. brick first came into general use. Hume, Appendix, "James I." The paving of London began under Henry VIII. At the coronation of Elizabeth, the streets through which she passed were newly strewn with gravel. Strype's "Annals."

dor, giving little evidence of civilization. Entering these mansions, one would appreciate the truth of Kirk's remark, that "the luxuries of life come before the comforts."* For an illustration, let us look at the residence of the queen herself, which was the most magnificent of all.

From the fourteenth century carpets had been in common use among the upper classes, both in France and in the Netherlands, being laid on floors of enamelled tiles or thick squares of polished oak.† In 1598, Hentzner, the German traveller, went with the nobleman whom he accompanied as tutor to see Queen Elizabeth in her palace at Greenwich. This, the place of her birth, was her favorite residence, especially in summer. The queen appeared richly attired and loaded down with jewels, but the floors of the palace were covered with what he calls hay, being probably rushes. A century before, Erasmus, writing of the habits of the people, to which he ascribed the frequency of the plague in England, said of the houses: "The floors are commonly of clay, strewed with rushes, under which lie unmolested an ancient collection of beer, grease, fragments, bones, spittle, and everything that is nasty." A hundred years, it seems, had made little change either in the covering of the floors or in its effects upon the public health, if we may judge from the continuance of the plague. Carpeting was used at this time in England, but was spread on the tables and not often on the floors. In the latter days of Elizabeth, according to Drake, linen was introduced to take its place.‡ This, however, is evidently a mistake, unless reference is made to a general introduction, for "The

---

* See p. 117.

† La Croix, "The Arts in the Middle Ages," p. 27.

‡ Nathan Drake, "Shakespeare and his Times," p. 407.

Northumberland Household Book" shows that a few table-cloths were used early in the century.*

If table linen was used among the wealthy classes before the end of the century, there was one piece of table furniture unknown till the reign of James I., and that was the fork. In France it had been known since 1379;† it was in common use among the Italians,‡ and presumably among the other Continental nations. In 1611, Thomas Coryat first introduced it into England, where even table-knives had not been in general use until 1563.§ Chaucer draws a very pretty picture of the Prioress at table:

> "At mete was she wel ytaughte withalle;
> She lette no morsel from hire lippes falle,
> Ne wette hire fingres in hire sauce depe.
> Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
> Thatte no drope ne fell upon hire brest."

This is all very charming in a poem of the fourteenth century; but probably we should change some of our ideas regarding the England of the sixteenth if we could look in upon the people, even of the upper classes, and see them dining perhaps off silver, but eating with their fingers and throwing the bones among the rushes on the floor.‖

Much has been said by imaginative writers about the great variety and abundance of food under which the

---

* Wild Will Darrell's washing bill in London, for three months in 1589, has an item of one table-cloth and fourteen napkins; but he wore a clean shirt every day, although no underclothes appear. Hall's "Elizabethan Society," p. 209.

† La Croix, "The Arts in the Middle Ages."

‡ Nathan Drake, p. 407.

§ Ibid.

‖ See Drake as to the dining-rooms of the country gentlemen.

tables of the English people groaned in the Elizabethan age. And here again, as in the case of the dwellings, the rare exceptions have been taken for the rule. Some few of the nobles, according to Harrison—and the nobles themselves were few in number*—had French cooks, and they were supplied with a variety of fresh meats, a succession of game, fish, and fruits, with sweets of all descriptions. Among the wealthy merchants of the city, and especially in the days when piracy as a business was at its height, there was also, doubtless, a variety of food. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that any considerable body of the people indulged in anything but the plainest and most primitive of fare, although this in most cases was found in great abundance.†

* There were only fifty-seven peers when Elizabeth came to the throne, and sixty-six at the time of her death.

† "Tillage was changed for pasture-grazing. Grain was dear and coarse meat was cheap. Bacon and fish went out of use. Game and poultry became luxuries, and vegetables were practically unknown. The people fed on salt beef, or roast and inferior mutton, with bad meal; and this monotonous cheer they washed down with potent liquor."—Hall's "Elizabethan Society," p. 76. Vegetables were not introduced from the Netherlands until the next century. Some of the prices of the time, as found in the household accounts, for 1589, of Will Darrell, a wealthy commoner, may interest the reader. It should be remembered that the purchasing value of money was very much greater than at present.

IN THE COUNTRY, LITTLECOTE.

	s.	*d.*
Sells wheat, per bushel	2	–
" barley, " "	1	1½
Buys beef, per lb.	–	1½
" 2 bushels of pease	4	2
" 1 lb. of sugar	1	8
" 6 lbs. of hops	3	–

Even among the middle classes and the gentry the cheer was very different from that generally pictured in the popular imagination. With them salt fish, salt

---

IN LONDON.

	s.	*d.*
Buys ½ lb. of tobacco	30	–
" 2 oz. of dates	–	3
" quire of paper	–	4
" a book	–	6
" a pound of candles	–	4
" a lemon	–	1
" oranges	–	2
" a quart of claret	–	6
" a pound of butter	–	4
" strawberries, 3 pyntes, May 23	–	12
" " 1 quart, June 11	–	6
" pound of sugar	–	17
" a barrel of beer	4	–
" a quart of cream	–	6
" "a pece of beef"	–	14
" "a loyne of veale"	–	22
" "a legg of mutton"	–	16

Washing-bill, 3 months, self and servants, shirts, collars, handkerchiefs, nightkerchiefs, socks, 1 waistcoat, 5 sheets, 1 table-cloth, 14 napkins, 17*s.* 5*d.* Hall. Turning these prices into our American currency at even four for one, and they would be about as follows: Wheat, per bushel, $2.00; beef, per pound, 12 cents; hops, 48 cents; sugar, $1.60; tobacco, $60; dates, $1.72; candles, 32 cents; butter, 32 cents; a quire of paper, 32 cents; a lemon, 8 cents; quart of claret, 48 cents; strawberries in May, per quart, 64 cents; in June, 48 cents; a barrel of beer, $4.00; washing, 3 months, $16.72. It is very difficult to determine the relative purchasing value of money at different periods, but four to one is very low for this time. The best authorities give four to one for the days of the Commonwealth. "The Interregnum," by F. A. Inderwick, p. 245. In Elizabeth's reign the difference was probably much greater. For later prices, compare Hume, "Hist. of England," Appendix to chapters on James I.

meat, bread, and ale made up, substantially, the bill of fare for at least nine months in the year. "The Northumberland Household Book," for example, shows that in the family of that great earl they had fresh meat for only about three months—from midsummer to Michaelmas, the 29th of September. To enable them to swallow the salt meat, on which they lived for the remainder of the year, one hundred and sixty gallons of mustard were provided.*

One thing in regard to the tastes of the time is very suggestive, and that is the fondness for sweets, which was common to all classes. Sugar was a novelty to these islanders, and, having money for its purchase, they ran to the extravagance of children. The teeth of the women, including the queen, were black from over-indulgence in this luxury.† The men began to import sweet and other wines from Spain and Portugal, and, to the amazement of foreigners, they always mixed them with sugar.‡

As we study this people from various quarters, and apply to them every kind of test, we shall see how consistent is the picture in all its details: the picture of a people with great energy and poetic instincts, brought into contact with an elder civilization, and awakening

---

* "The Northumberland Household Book" gives the bill of fare for every member of the family, and some of its details are very curious. My lord and lady have for breakfast on fast-days a quart of beer, as much wine, a loaf of bread, two pieces of salt fish, six red herrings, four white ones, or a dish of sprats. On flesh days, half a chine of mutton, or a chine of beef boiled. The young lord has half a loaf of bread, a quart of beer, and two mutton bones. Will Darrell, while in London, in 1589, fared more sumptuously, but lived almost entirely on meats. See his daily bill of fare in Hall, p. 212, etc.

† Hentzner's "Travels." ‡ Drake, p. 409.

to a new life. Look at the appearance of a gallant about the court. His beard will be cut so as to resemble a fan, a spade, or the letter T. He has great gold rings in his ears, set perhaps with pearls or diamonds. About his neck will possibly be a ribbon, on which he will string his other jewels for exhibition.* His dress excites astonishment everywhere. He has no costume of his own, and so borrows from all his neighbors. Portia describes him, in speaking of Faulconbridge, the young baron of England: "How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere."†

Nor was the female attire any less remarkable. Its fashions, too, were borrowed from every quarter, and changed every year; while the unmarried women, copying the example of the queen, who took great pride in her fine figure, decked themselves out in gowns with waists which, from their scantiness, would put to the blush the most hardened attendant of a modern court reception.‡

---

* Harrison's "Description of England;" Drake, pp. 390, 397.

† "Merchant of Venice," act i. sc. 2. Says a writer of the time: "I read of a painter that would paint every countryman in his accustomed apparel—the Dutch, the Spaniard, the Italian, the Frenchman; but when he came to the Englishman, he painted him naked, and gave him cloth and bade him make it himself, for he changed his fashion so often that he knew not how to make it."—Becon's "Jewell of Joye." See also Froude, v. 121. Harrison, in describing the fantastic attire of the day, says "that except it were a dog in a doublet, you shall not see any one so disguised as are my countrymen in England. I have met with some of these trulles in London, so disguised that it hath passed my skill to discover whether they were men or women."

‡ Goadby's "England of Shakespeare," p. 63. See also Hentzner's description of the dress of Queen Elizabeth.

But although foreign influences led at this time to much that was fantastic in feminine apparel,* they served one useful purpose, since they introduced the general wearing of linen fabrics to supplant the old undergarments made of wool. This came about through the teachings of the Netherland refugees, who were distinguished, among other things, for their personal neatness, and who first taught the Englishwomen how to starch their clothes.†

If foreigners were astonished at the garb of the Englishman, his fondness for sweets, and the appearance of his dwellings, they were no less affected by his reverence for the crown. So abject was Parliament in the time of Henry VIII. that when the king's name was mentioned the whole house stood up and bowed to the vacant throne.‡ But even this exhibition was surpassed

* Meteren, quoted by Motley, "United Netherlands," i. 309.

† "It was in the year 1564 that Mrs. Dinghen van den Plasse, who was born at Teenen, in Flanders, and was the daughter of a knight of that province, came to London with her husband for safety; she was the first who taught *starching* in those days of impurity. Our historians go further, and condescend to inform us that her price was about five pounds to teach how to starch, and twenty pounds how to seethe starch; and that in a little time she got an estate, being greatly encouraged by gentlemen and ladies." Burn's "Foreign Protestant Refugees," p. 189, quoting "an old writer."

Stow, in his "Annals," adds: "Some very few of the best and most curious wives of that time, observing the neatness and delicacy of the Dutch for whiteness and fine wearing of linen, made them cambric ruffs and sent them to Mrs. Dinghen to starch, and after a while they made them ruffs of lawn, which was at that time a stuff most strange and wonderful, and thereupon rose a general scoff or byword that shortly they would make ruffs of a spider's web, and then they began to send their daughters and neatest kinswomen to Mrs. Dinghen to learn how to starch."

‡ Green's "Short History," p. 355.

during the reign of Elizabeth. When Hentzner was at Greenwich Palace, he noticed that whoever spoke to the queen fell upon his knees, and that when she walked through the presence chamber, all the lords and ladies, as she looked in their direction, did the same. This was surprising enough, but much more was to come afterwards. He witnessed the setting of her dinner-table, and there saw this sight: "A gentleman entered the room bearing a rod, and along with him another who had a table-cloth, which, after they had both kneeled three times with the utmost veneration, he spread upon the table, and after kneeling again they both retired. Then came two others, one with the rod again, the other with a salt-cellar, a plate, and bread; when they had kneeled as the others had done, and placed what was brought upon the table, they too retired with the same ceremonies performed by the first. At last came an unmarried lady—we were told she was a countess—and along with her a married one, bearing a tasting-knife; the former was dressed in white silk, who, when she had prostrated herself three times in the most graceful manner, approached the table and rubbed the plates with bread and salt, with as much awe as if the queen had been present." After this ceremony the dishes were brought in, tasted, and then carried to the private dining-room of her majesty.*

Such genuflections before a table-cloth and salt-cellar betoken a remarkable condition of society. If these acts of reverence, which men usually reserve for their Creator, were thus performed before a scrap of linen and a piece of silver, because the queen was about to

* Hentzner's "Travels." The tasting was to detect poison, and was not uncommon in other countries.

use them, what must have been the awe with which the people looked upon the queen herself! Giordano Bruno, the famous Italian philosopher, throws some light upon this question. He visited England in 1583, and remained two years. Subsequently, returning to Rome, he was accused of heresy and burned at the stake. One of the charges brought against him by the Inquisition was that he had described the heretical Elizabeth as a goddess. In reply, he said that in his book he praised the Queen of England, calling her a goddess, not in religion, but as an epithet given by the ancients to princes; and in England, where he wrote the book, it is their habit to give the title of goddess to the queen.* This goddess, as she appears to us in history, seems a strange divinity to worship; but, after all, she was only a type of her people, and in her we can read their character.†

The servility which characterized the time of Elizabeth was not confined to the royal court. Erasmus, when in England, wrote to a friend saying that he would

---

* "Life of Bruno," by Frith, p. 110. The courtiers around Elizabeth had not studied the classics for nothing. When she is sixty, Raleigh thus speaks of her in a letter intended for her perusal: "I, that was wont to see her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks like a nymph, sometimes sitting in the shade like a goddess, sometimes singing like an angel, sometimes playing like Orpheus; behold the sorrow of this world: once amiss hath bereaved me of all."

† James I. dispensed with the genuflections of his courtiers; but, still, he compared himself with the Saviour. "Christ had his John, and I have my George," referring to Buckingham. Abbot's "Bacon," p. 280. In a public proclamation issued in 1610, he speaks of kings and princes as "gods on earth." Taswell-Langmead's "Const. Hist. of England," p. 508.

find the great people most agreeable and gracious, but warning him not to presume upon their intimacy, since they regarded themselves as gods.* A century later, the noble lord who serves his queen kneeling demands the same condescension from his inferiors when they wait on him. It is only when we appreciate the depth of this feeling that we can comprehend the force of the recoil in the next century, which, for a time, levelled all distinctions of rank and sent a monarch to the scaffold. With the Restoration the servility returns. Charles II., while at his meals, ostentatiously called Grammont's attention to the fact that his officers served him on their knees. Grammont, as unaccustomed to English cooking as to English manners, replied: "I thank your majesty for the explanation; I thought they were begging pardon for giving you so bad a dinner."†

Hentzner, while in London, had an opportunity also of seeing some of the amusements of the city people. The favorite sports were bull-baiting, bear-baiting, and bear-whipping, for which a theatre was especially provided. For baiting, the bull or bear was securely chained, and then set upon by dogs, who worried him to death. To witness this was a charming recreation, but it was thrown into the shade by the bear-beating, in which the unhappy brute, being chained to a post and blindfolded, was flogged to death with whips.‡ In this diversion there was little of the excitement which attends a bull-fight, where skill and nerve are required by the success-

* "The noble lords are gods in their own eyes."—"Times of Erasmus and Luther;" Froude's "Short Studies," p. 69.

† "Grammont's Memoirs," Bohn's ed. p. 25. This custom was not finally given up until the reign of George I. Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," i. 239.

‡ Hentzner's "Travels."

ful matadore; but if the bear made noise enough and was long enough in dying, the amusement must have been intense. Nor was it the masses alone that enjoyed these sports; they were the particular delight of the nobles and of Queen Elizabeth herself. In fact, the Privy Council, in 1591, issued an order that no plays should be exhibited on Thursday, because on that day bear-baiting and such like pastime had been usually practised, "which are maintained for her majesty's pleasure." With them she entertained foreign ambassadors, and when she made her famous visit to Kenilworth, thirteen bears were provided for her diversion, being baited with a large species of ban-dog.* It may be that the Puritan, when he abolished these exhibitions, cared nothing for the bear; he certainly conferred a service on humanity by doing away with such brutalizing sights.†

Having seen something of the Englishman's dwelling, his food, costume, manners, and sports, let us now consider his education, religion, and morals.

And first we must notice that in regard to the learning of this time a most exaggerated notion prevails in some quarters, the result of judging of a whole people from a few isolated individuals. Elizabeth had been brought up in comparative seclusion until she ascended the throne, at the age of twenty-five. Her father, despite his faults, was a friend of letters, and gave his daughters, who were in the line of succession to the throne, such an education as was fitted for an English monarch of the

* Drake, p. 430.

† In 1603, James I. by a proclamation prohibited bear-baiting and bull-baiting on the Sabbath. Strype's "Annals," iv. 379. The bull-baiting was re-established after the Restoration, and continued to be a favorite amusement all through the eighteenth century. Lecky, i. 598.

day. That Elizabeth should have spoken four or five languages is of itself little proof of intellectual cultivation. All the better class of Russians do the same to-day, while couriers and boys brought up in such polyglot centres as Constantinople often speak ten or twelve.

But, apart from this, the queen carried to the throne a love of the classics, which she retained all through her life. She read and translated the Latin authors, and, what was more rare in England, she also read Greek. In addition, she made these studies fashionable at court, so that several other ladies pursued them with success. Judging in a loose, general way from these well-known facts, many persons reason that if the women of that day had such accomplishments, the acquisitions of the men must have been phenomenal. But here is the mistake. Elizabeth, in her education, as in many of her traits of character, was more of a man than a woman.* Roger Ascham, her Greek teacher, said, though perhaps panegyrically, that she devoted more time to reading and study than any six gentlemen of her court, and that she read more Greek with him at Windsor Castle every day than some prebendaries of the Church read Latin in a week.†

* Sir Robert Cecil said of her that she "was more than a man, and (in troth) somtyme less than a woman." — Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ," i. 345, Letters of 1603.

† Roger Ascham's "Scholemaster," p. 63, Mayor's ed., 1863. A specimen of the English written by Elizabeth is given in the following prayer, which she composed in 1597:

"Oh God, Almaker, keeper, and guider, inurement of thy rare seen, unused, and seel'd heard of goodness poured in so plentiful a sort upon us full oft, breeds now this boldness to crave with bowed knees and hearts of humility thy large hand of helping power, to assist with wonder our just cause, not founded on pride's motion, or begun on malice stock, but, as thou best knowest, to whom nought

It is from her reputation for learning, with that of a few ladies of her court, and some of the men distinguished in civil life, such as Smith, Sadler, and Raleigh, that, as the iconoclastic Hallam says, "the general character of her reign has been, in this point of view, considerably overrated."* Such learning as existed in the island was confined almost exclusively to the classics, which the people of the Continent, and especially the Italians, had been cultivating for two centuries.† Of

---

is hid, grounded on just defence from wrongs, hate, and bloody desire of conquest, for since means thou hast imparted to save that thou has given by enjoying such a people as scorns their bloodshed, where surety ours is one. Fortify, dear God, such hearts in such sort as their best part may be worst, that to the truest part meant worse, with least loss to such a nation as depise their lives for their country's good; that all foreign lands may laud and admire the omnipotency of thy works, a fact alone for thee only to perform. So shall thy name be spread for wonders wrought, and the faithful encouraged to repose in thy unfellowed grace; and we that minded nought but right, enchained in thy bonds for perpetual slavery, and live and die the sacrifisers of our souls for such obtained favors. Warrant, dear Lord, all this with thy command."—Strype, "Annals," iv. 440.

Those persons who, from the flatterers of Elizabeth, have formed a high opinion of her literary attainments, may, with considerable profit, study this production, which is given just as she wrote it for public use in the churches, free from the emendations of modern editors. If she wrote and spoke other languages in the same manner, she might, without great effort, have mastered a large number.

* Hallam's "Literature of Europe," ii. 39. Again, speaking of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of the English Church, the same author remarks: "Whitgift was not of much learning, if it be true that, as the editors of the 'Biographia Britannica' intimate, he had no acquaintance with the Greek language. This must seem strange to those who have an exaggerated notion of the scholarship of that age."—Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 202, note.

† The Continental scholars at this time, in addition to Greek and Latin, were cultivating Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, etc. See last chapter.

science the English knew almost nothing, and even the study of the simpler branches of mathematics was reprobated by men like Ascham.*

Bruno, when he visited England in 1583, met most of the men who were accounted scholars. He expounded to them the theory that the earth revolves around the sun, but he made few converts. Going to Oxford, he describes the Dons, who were court nominees, as "men arrayed in long robes of velvet, with hands most precious for the multitude of precious stones on their fingers, golden chains about their necks, and with manners as void of courtesy as cowherds." The students were ignorant, boorish, and indevout, occupied in horse-play, drinking, and duelling, toasting in ale-houses, and graduating in the noble science of self-defence.† The learned Italian lectured at the university on the immortality of the soul and other kindred subjects, and was near coming to blows with the pedagogues, who were slenderly endowed with arguments. He found them armed, not with prudence and power, but with "hearts that died of cold, and learning that died of hunger." Returning to London, he met a little circle of congenial spirits, and formed with them a society, in imitation of the Italian academies, which numbered among its members Sidney, Greville, Dyer, and Temple.‡

---

* "The Scholemaster," pp. 14, 210.

† The examination for a degree was merely nominal. A man might graduate from a university, and yet be almost illiterate. Hallam's "Literature in Europe," ii. 308.

‡ Frith's "Life of Bruno," pp. 121, 125, 128. Still, after Bruno's visit, England produced three scientific men, of whom any country might be proud—Harvey, Gilbert, and Hariott. All, however, had pursued their studies on the Continent.

After leaving England, Bruno went to Germany, where he resided for several years. For the learning which he found there, the readiness to entertain new ideas, the devotion to art, and the general kindliness of the people, he was filled with unbounded admiration. Speaking of the seven branches of university education, he called them the seven pillars of wisdom. On these pillars, he said, wisdom built her home, first in Egypt, then in Persia under Zoroaster, next in India, then in Thrace, Greece, and Italy, and finally in Germany.*

Before leaving the subject of scientific education in England, we may well pause for a moment to consider an event which occurred in the year preceding Bruno's arrival—an event which forms a landmark in history, and the reception of which among the English is of great significance.

When Julius Cæsar made his famous reform of the calendar, the scientific men of Rome calculated that the year consisted of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, and they therefore provided for the addition of a day in every fourth year. After some sixteen centuries this calculation was found to be slightly erroneous, and for some time the scholars of Italy had been work-

* "Since the empire has been in this land," he says, "more genius and art is to be met with than among other nations." Again, he remarks that there is something "truly divine in the spirit of that nation." These and other remarks of a like character in Bruno's writings, showing the contrast between England and Germany in the sixteenth century, before the devastation of the Thirty Years' War wiped out German civilization, seem to have escaped the notice of the English biographer of the great Italian. Some of them will be found quoted in an article on Bruno, by Karl Blind, in the *Nineteenth Century* for July, 1889. See also as to England, Whewell's "History of the Inductive Sciences," article "Bruno."

ing over the problem of its correction. Finally, in 1581, they solved the problem, arrived at the exact length of the solar year — within some thirty seconds — and discovered that the world was ten days behind the true time. Accordingly, Pope Gregory XIII. issued a proclamation, which provided for dropping these ten days in October, 1582, and also pointed out to future generations that by the omission of three days in each four hundred years thereafter all substantial errors would be obviated. In the Netherland states, ruled by the Prince of Orange, this reform was at once adopted. Already they had changed the day for beginning the new year from the 25th of March to the 1st of January.* And now, however they might differ from Italy in questions of religion, they purposed to keep touch in mere scientific matters.

The English, however, who knew and cared nothing about astronomy, saw no necessity for an alteration of the calendar. For nearly two centuries thereafter their country occupied towards the greater part of Europe the position in this matter which semi-barbarous Russia holds to day. It was not until 1752 that, by an act of Parliament, her calendar was corrected by the omission of the superfluous days, and that the beginning of the legal year was fixed at the 1st of January instead of at the 25th of March. Hence, during this whole period we have to calculate the dates in English, as compared with those in Continental history, by changing them from Old to New Style. The preamble to the act of Parliament by which the change was finally brought about in England reads as if a great discovery had just been

* Davies's "Holland," ii. 30; Brodhead's "Hist. of New York," i. 443.

made. It begins: "Whereas, the Julian calendar hath been discovered to be erroneous, by means whereof the spring equinox, which at the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, happened on the 21st of March, now happens on the tenth day of the same month; and the said error is still increasing." Then follows the enactment providing for dropping eleven days in September and for beginning the next legal year with the 1st of January. It took nearly two centuries for the Parliament of England to discover that the Julian calendar was erroneous, but even then it displayed great courage in correcting the mistake. The people could not understand the matter, and complained bitterly that their rulers were robbing them of a portion of their lives. In fact, as is shown by Hogarth's picture of the "Election Entertainment" — engraved in 1755 — "Give us our eleven days," became a regular party cry of the opposition.*

Such was the condition of learning at the English universities, and among the highest classes at the court while Elizabeth was on the throne. A few scholars, very few in number, studied Latin and Greek imperfectly and

---

* It is interesting to notice the way in which the matter of reforming the calendar in England is treated by modern English writers, who, in this as in most other matters, overlook the comparative backwardness of their forefathers, and so, by insinuation if not directly, attribute the delay to the intense Protestantism of the country which objected to a measure originating with the pope. But Scotland, much more intensely Protestant, which was under the influence of Continental scholars, reformed her calendar in 1600, and Denmark and Sweden, the last of the Protestant states in 1700, more than half a century before England took her action. It is greatly to the credit of Lord Burghley that he urged the adoption of the change in England when it was first introduced upon the Continent. Strype's "Annals," ii. 355.

little else. Of the poets I shall speak hereafter, when I come to discuss the outburst of national energy which followed the destruction of the Spanish Armada; but it may be noticed here that in prose literature nothing of any importance appeared until the publication, in 1594, of the first four books of Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity." Up to that date England was about as barren of prose authors as of scholars.*

Taking it all in all, this is not a lofty nor an extensive elevation, but it springs from a valley very dark and deep. Looking at the intellectual condition of the people at large, we shall find that it corresponds with everything else which we have noticed in their life. In 1547, only eleven years before Elizabeth ascended the throne, Parliament passed a law, giving the benefit of clergy to peers of the realm who should be convicted of certain crimes, even though they could not read.† If some of the peers of the realm, only about sixty in number, did not know their letters, what should we expect of the men next below them? The fact is, that in the rural districts to read and write were esteemed rare accomplishments all through the reign of Elizabeth, and, even among the gentry below the first degree, there was little difference in literary accomplishments between the master and his boorish attendants.‡

---

* Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 217. "It must be owned by every one, not absolutely blinded by a love of scarce books, that the prose literature of the queen's reign, taken generally, is but very mean."—Hallam's "Literature of Europe," ii. 256.

† 1 Edward VI., cap. 12.

‡ Drake, p. 210. In the time of James I., as Burton tells us, though there was a sprinkling of the gentry, here and there one, excellently well learned, yet the major part were bent wholly on hawks

When now we descend one step lower, we reach a class almost wholly illiterate. Shakespeare's father belonged to this order. He was High-bailiff of Stratford, but could not even write his name; neither could the poet's daughter Judith, nor even the eldest daughter of the immortal Milton.* Out of nineteen aldermen in Stratford, when Shakespeare was born, 1564, only six could write their names.† Nor was this ignorance confined to the laymen. In 1578, according to Neal, out of one hundred and forty clergymen in Cornwall belonging to the Established Church, not one was capable of preaching, and throughout the kingdom those who could preach were in the proportion of about one to four.‡

---

and hounds, "and carried away many times with intemperate lust, gaming, and drinking." If they read a book at any time, "'tis an English Chronicle, Sir Huon of Bordeaux, Amadis de Gaule, etc., a play book, or some pamphlet of news, and that at seasons only when they cannot stir abroad."—Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," fol. ed. p. 84. Even in the reign of James II., the average country squire had not made much improvement. "Many lords of manors," says Macaulay, "had received an education differing little from that of their menial servants. The heir of an estate often passed his boyhood and youth at the seat of his family, with no better tutors than grooms and gamekeepers, and scarce attained learning enough to sign his name to a mittimus."—Macaulay's "Hist. of England," chap. iii. These were the men who, elected to Parliament, formed the House of Commons. But if they knew little of books, they had some fixed ideas regarding civil freedom.

* Drake, p. 629. Masson's "Milton," vi. 447. Milton's younger daughters, after his blindness, read to him books in various foreign languages, but they did not understand a word of what they read. "Memoir of Milton," by his nephew, Edward Phillips, 1694.

† Knight.

‡ Neal's "History of the Puritans." Hallam says that "this may be deemed by some an instance of Neal's prejudice. But that his-

It is very interesting, while on the subject of education, to compare the English people in the time of Elizabeth with their ancestors three hundred years earlier, before the Norman influence had disappeared. The Rev. Dr. Jessopp, an eminent English antiquarian, has recently discovered a great mass of documents relating to Rougham, a small parish in Norfolk, from which its continuous history can be traced for the past six centuries. In an essay entitled "Village Life Six Hundred Years Ago," to which brief allusion has been made in the last chapter, he gives an account of this parish in the days of Edward I. So far as the general mode of life, the dwellings of the people, their occupations, and their morality are concerned, this account might be taken for a description of a rural parish in the time of Elizabeth, as portrayed by the writers of the latter period. In scarcely one particular is an improvement visible, while in some directions there was a great deterioration. Six hundred years ago the farms were all very small, in this parish never exceeding two hundred acres, and were cultivated by a class of yeomen who, although nominally tenants, as every one was under the feudal system, were in fact the substantial owners of the soil.

But the most remarkable falling-off was in the matter of education, and the results of the researches of the antiquarian in relation to this subject may astonish those persons who have been accustomed to regard the progress of the English people as continuous. The parish which Dr. Jessopp investigated contained less than three thousand acres, and was purely agricultural. It

---

torian is not so ill-informed as they suppose; and the fact is highly probable." "The majority of the clergy were nearly illiterate."—"Const. Hist.," i. 203.

had a village church, but no monastery, abbey, or other religious house to attract ecclesiastics. And yet he found, by the records, that during the reign of Edward I. there were at the same time eight, and probably ten or twelve, persons in this little parish who knew how to write well. He ventures the opinion, from his investigations in various quarters, that, in proportion to the inhabitants, the number of persons who could write had not increased in England during the last six centuries, until about forty years ago.*

Such being the state of education among the subjects of "Good Queen Bess," what shall we say of religion and morality? If there is no more connection between moral and intellectual development than some persons imagine, we might expect this people to be at least devout and moral. Let us see what were the facts. In the first place, as to religion, looking only at the surface, it seemed to many persons as if there were none in the land. The revival of learning at court was, as Taine

---

* "The Coming of the Friars, and other Historical Essays," by the Rev. Augustus Jessopp, D.D. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889). Prof. Thorold Rogers states that there was no improvement in English agriculture from the reign of Edward I. to that of Elizabeth, and that probably less land was under cultivation at the latter date. *Time*, March, 1890. John Foster, in his work on "Popular Ignorance," makes some very just remarks on the degradation and illiteracy of the English people at large, among whom flourished the intellectual chiefs who have given a factitious character to the Elizabethan age. He also uses very trenchant language in relation to the governing classes of that country, who, until a very recent date, allowed "an incalculable and ever-increasing tribe of human creatures to grow up in a condition to show what a wretched and offensive thing is human nature left to itself." See Bohn's ed., 1856, Preface, and p. 63, etc.

has well said, a pure Pagan Renaissance. The authors read were the Greek and Latin classics, or the poets and story-tellers of Italy, who in the main were as irreligious as they were immoral. Here and there might be found a noble who had some notions of religion, but, although from the queen down they all talked about it, the earnest believers were rarely found in the upper circles. One of them was the Earl of Essex, whose widow married Leicester. He died, in 1576, like a patriot and a Christian, his last thoughts being turned towards his country and his God. "He prayed much for the noble realm of England," said a bystander, "for which he feared many calamities." Of his countrymen he said: "The Gospel had been preached to them, but they were neither Papists nor Protestants; of no religion, but full of pride and iniquity. There was nothing but infidelity, infidelity, infidelity; atheism, atheism; no religion, no religion." *

Well might the dying earl take a gloomy view of the religious situation. In many of the dioceses at least a third of the parishes had no clergymen at all.† Where the livings were filled, the incumbents, in a majority of cases, were nearly illiterate, and often addicted to drunkenness and other low vices.‡ As the patrons, under the remarkable system which still prevails in England, selected the clergymen, and often chose their bakers, butlers, cooks, or stablemen to fill the sacred office,

---

* Froude, xi. 220. † Idem, vii. 477.

‡ Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 203; Hall, p. 105. As I shall show in a subsequent chapter, this condition of the Church was largely the result of excluding from the pulpits the most learned and diligent of the clergy because of their Puritanism. They were doing work in other quarters.

while they took the income, we need not wonder at anything which is related of them.*

Above the clergymen stood the bishops, and many of them were mere time-serving politicians, anxious only to lay up a fortune for themselves and their families. This is not remarkable in view of their relations to the new establishment. When Aylmer, for example, preached before Elizabeth and dared to denounce the extravagance of the court in the matter of apparel, his mistress threatened, if he repeated the offence, to send him at once to heaven, but without his head.† After such a lesson it is not probable that many persons were offended by hearing criticism of their vices from priest or bishop. Of course all of the Established clergy were not corrupt or sensual. There were always among them men distinguished for their piety and virtue. But these, like the scholars, were so few in number as hardly to produce an impression on the mass of the community, without the aid of some outside influence such as that which had developed England in the past.

Considering now the question of morality, we find the picture nearly, if not quite, as dark—becoming darker, too, in some of its features, as time went on—and for the causes we have not far to seek. The spoils of the monasteries amounted, perhaps, to one fifth of the kingdom's wealth. All this colossal plunder had been suddenly thrown over to a horde of courtiers, unrestrained by any

* Drake speaks of the tales of their gross debauchery, to say nothing of the charges brought against them of perjury and manslaughter. "Shakespeare and his Times," p. 44, citing Harrison and the Talbot Papers.

† See as to the bishops, Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 226; Hall, p. 105; Froude, xii. 21. See also Chapter IX. for a fuller discussion of this subject.

religious principle. The demoralization soon worked down to the masses, all forms of industry being disorganized, and society being disturbed to its very foundations. At the same time, the commerce of the world had made great strides, so that the ocean carried on its bosom incalculable treasures. Like their Saxon and Danish ancestors, the English, in the main, despised the men whose labors created this new wealth, but they took their share of it by becoming, what those ancestors had been, a race of corsairs. Secure in their rock-bound island fortress, and protected by the wars which engrossed the whole attention of their neighbors, they plundered friend and foe alike, and heaped up cargoes of costly fabrics, gold, silver, and precious stones, as in a pirates' cave.* Rioting in such plunder by land and sea, we need not marvel at the modes in which they displayed their gains, nor at the immorality which seemed for a time to taint almost every class in the community.

Before looking at the evidence of this immorality, let us see what intelligent foreign observers of three centuries ago thought about this and other kindred subjects. Says Hentzner, writing in 1598: "The English are serious, like the Germans, lovers of show, liking to be followed wherever they go by troops of servants, who wear their master's arms in silver, fastened to their left sleeves, and are justly ridiculed for wearing tails hanging down their back. They are good sailors, and better pirates, cunning, treacherous, thievish."†

Meteren, the learned Antwerp historian, who lived many years in London, thus describes some of their traits at about the same period: "As a people, they are stout-

---

* In the next chapter I shall have much more to say about these corsairs.

† Hentzner's "Travels."

hearted, vehement, eager; cruel in war, zealous in attack, little fearing death; not revengeful, but fickle; presumptuous, rash, boastful, deceitful; very suspicious, especially of strangers, whom they despise. They are full of courteous and hypocritical gestures and words, which they consider to imply good manners, civility, and wisdom. The people are not so laborious as the French and Hollanders, preferring to live an indolent life, like the Spaniards. The most difficult and ingenious of the handicrafts are in the hands of foreigners, as is the case with the lazy inhabitants of Spain. They feed many sheep, with fine wool, from which, two hundred years ago, they learned to make cloth. They keep many idle servants, and many wild animals for their pleasure, instead of cultivating the soil. They have many ships but do not even catch fish enough for their own consumption, but purchase of their neighbors. When they go away from home, riding or travelling, they always wear their best clothes, contrary to the habit of other nations."*

In these accounts we see the descendants of Benvenuto Cellini's "English savages" of the century before, picturesque, full of interest, but as yet little touched by civilization.

Judging from what they saw in London and about the court, the foreigners were right who thought the English very deficient in moral sense. Consider, first, the character of the woman on the throne. She could not tell the truth; in fact, her lies were so transparent that, although sometimes perplexing, they deceived no one.† Of good faith she had no conception, for she be-

---

* Emanuel Van Meteren, "History of the Netherlands," quoted by Motley, "United Netherlands," i. 307, etc.

† Froude, Green, Creighton, etc.

trayed, or attempted to betray, every one that trusted her. If her people were dishonest, they but followed her example. She was a partner of the pirates who, sailing from the ports of England, infested every sea; and even her partners she defrauded when it came to a division of the plunder.* We are told that profanity was then so common among the masses of England that if they spoke but three or four words, yet an oath or two would be mingled with them.† In this, too, the monarch, and that monarch a woman, set them the example. Nor were her expletives mere fanciful and picturesque ornaments of speech. She used good mouth-filling oaths, such as she had learned from her father, Bluff King Hal.‡ She put them into her letters, too, even when addressing a high dignitary of the Church. To Cox she wrote: "Proud prelate! you know what you were before I made you what you are; if you do not immediately comply with my request, by God I will unfrock you! Elizabeth." §

The question of the queen's relations with her lovers is a controverted one, into which we need not enter.‖ But there is no room for doubt as to the character of the men and women by whom she was surrounded.

---

* Froude, xi. 428. † Drake, p. 423.

‡ Her favorite oath was, "By God's Son," which she used as "frequently as a fish-woman."—"Nugæ Antiquæ," i. 354.

§ Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 226.

‖ "It is true that some, not prejudiced against Elizabeth, have doubted whether 'Cupid's fiery dart' was as effectually 'quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon' as her poet intimates. This I must leave to the reader's judgment. She certainly went strange lengths of indelicacy."—Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 155. Froude, who has made a most careful examination of the subject, acquits her, however, of what the world calls dishonor. Froude, xii. 521.

Faunt, secretary of Sir Francis Walsingham, in a letter dated August 1st, 1582, says of Elizabeth's court: "The only discontent I have is to live where there is so little godliness and exercise of religion, so dissolute manners and corrupt conversation generally, which I find to be worse than when I knew the place first." The next year he writes that it is a place where all enormities are practised, where sin reigns in the highest degree.* Sir John Harrington, in his private diary for 1594, describes it as the abode not of love, but of "the lustie god of gallantry, Asmodeus."† The remarks of Faunt have sometimes been attributed to his extreme Puritanism; but Harrington, a courtier and Elizabeth's godson, was no Puritan, and all the authorities agree as to the decline of private morals during the reign of the "Virgin Queen."

Mary, surnamed the Bloody, with all her religious intolerance, was austere in her morals, and her court was, in that respect, a model for the world.‡ Elizabeth, for a few years, followed her example, the early Reformers by whom she was surrounded being, for the most part, men of exemplary private lives. But, as time went on, a marked change for the worse came over the morals of the court and nation. It is not necessary to agree with Hallam in attributing this moral decadence to Puritanism, since this seems to have been an effect, and not a cause, of the change; but in regard to the fact of the decadence ending in the grossest immorality, which in the next reign surpassed anything ever before known in English history, there can be no question.§

---

* Birch, "Memoirs of the Reign of Elizabeth," i. 25, 29.

† "Nugæ Antíquæ," i. 166. ‡ Lingard, vi. 195.

§ "We may easily perceive, in the literature of the later period of the queen, what our biographical knowledge confirms, that much of

Such was the state of morals among the courtiers around the queen. Possibly the reader looks for something better among the gentry and the common people. But here the story is little different. Every one knows the tale of Wild Will Darrell—perhaps apocryphal, however—how he murdered his new-born babe by holding it on the burning coals until it was reduced to ashes, and then bought immunity from punishment by an enormous bribe. Speaking of him, Hall says: "It was, indeed, as common for men of his class to debauch their neighbors' wives as for two yeomen to draw on each other at a country fair, or for a craftsman to be butchered by his fellow at Smithfield. The atonement for blood or dishonor done was trivial if it were not exacted on the spot. The offender could be reached best through his purse; he bribed the law and escaped, or, at the worst, he was disfranchised for a year or two." *

---

the austerity characteristic of her earlier years had vanished away. The course of time, the progress of vanity, the prevalent dislike, above all, of the Puritans, avowed enemies of gayety, concurred to this change. . . . The most distinguished courtiers, Raleigh, Essex, Blount, and we must add Sidney, were men of brilliant virtues, but not without license of morals; while many of the wits and poets, such as Nash, Greene, Peele, Marlowe, were notoriously of very dissolute lives." Hallam's "Literature of Europe," ii. 193. See as to Leicester's matrimonial experiences "Biographia Britannica," article "Robert Dudley;" "Dict. of National Biography," article "Christopher Blount;" "The Puritans and Queen Elizabeth," by Samuel Hopkins, i. 273, iii. 224. As to his step-daughter, Sir Philip Sidney's "Stella," and her relations with Sidney and her later lover, "Dict. of National Biography," article "Charles Blount," and Hall's "Society in the Elizabethan Age," p. 92. As to Raleigh, Aiken's "Court of Queen Elizabeth;" Strype's "Annals," iv. 129. For a summary of the general condition of morals, see Hall, p. 104, etc.

* "Society in the Elizabethan Age," p. 11.

It has been the fashion among people who dislike the Puritans to make light of the excesses of this age, and to revile the men who did away with the lively sports of Merry England. One of these was the May Festival, which seems so charming in the mellowed distance. The night before the 1st of May, the whole rural population went into the woods together, men, women, and children, old and young, and passed the time in games and sport. On the morrow they returned with the May-pole, borne by oxen ornamented with ribbons and flowers, and on the ground strewn with green boughs they feasted and danced till evening. But, beautiful as is this picture when elaborated by the poets, the Puritans made no more of a mistake about May-day than about the bear-baiting, which they also abolished. This and other festivals were, in fact, like the Saturnalia of pagan Rome, sanctioning by custom the practice of the grossest debauchery.* Hentzner, the sober German, looked on all of them with amazement. "On Shrove Tuesday," said he, "at the sound of a bell the folk become insane, thousands at a time, and forget all decency and common sense. It is to Satan and the devil that they pay homage, and do sacrifice in these abominable pleasures." Does one wonder that earnest men, when they began to look at life seriously, put down such abominations?

It is possible that the people of the rural districts were not more dissolute than their fathers and grandfathers had been. Still, the breaking-down of all religious restraints, including the confessional, must have weakened the average morality. But in the cities and among

---

* See as to their immorality, Stubbe's "Anatomie of Abuses" (1583), p. 168, etc., quoted in Taine's "English Literature."

the wealthy classes, even outside the court, the change for the worse was very marked. Ascham attributed it largely to the influence of Italy, and he was doubtless correct to some extent. The English youth went there now, not, as the scholars in the century before had gone, to study Greek, but to graduate in the vices which an advancing civilization was carrying to perfection. Around them were works of art such as the world had not seen since the days of Phidias, but for art they cared as little as for learning. Their natures could, with a few illustrious exceptions, like Sidney and Milton at a much later day, take in only the grossest forms of sensual enjoyment; and for these, with their newly acquired wealth, they manifested the keenest avidity. The Italian proverb pithily summed up the situation, "An Italianated Englishman is an incarnate devil." *

But the men who went to Italy were few in numbers, and their influence was limited. A greater corrupter was the Italian books, now for the first time translated into English and sold in every London shop. These, we must remember, were not of the class represented by the "Divine Comedy" of Dante, but were tales of which those in the "Decameron" were perhaps the least objectionable. Poor Ascham, in writing of this literature, seems almost to lose heart. In our forefathers' time, he says, few books were read in English but certain works of chivalry, in which the chief pleasure lay in man-

---

* "The Scholemaster," p. 78. Lord Burghley, in a letter to his son, said: "And suffer not thy sons to pass the Alps; for they shall learn nothing there but pride, blasphemy, and atheism. And if by travel they get a few broken languages, they will profit them not more than to have meat served in divers dishes."—Strype's "Annals," iv. 341.

slaughter and the violation of the seventh commandment. They were bad enough, and yet ten such works did not one tenth of the mischief wrought by one of these poems or tales made in Italy and translated in England. Neither the lay nor the clerical authorities would do anything to arrest this curse, but he, the simple schoolmaster, could not sit still and hold his peace.*

Fortunately, there were some earnest men in England who sympathized with Ascham. They were as yet few in number, and never made up anything like a majority of the population; but in the next century, through discipline and courage, they will capture the government, and for a time corrupting sports and books will go. Then will come the Restoration and the consequent reaction; the English upper classes will be brought into contact with the French, and will absorb from them, as from the Italians a century before, little but their vices. These vices, engrafted on uncultivated natures, will make the court of Charles II. such a scene of open immorality as the modern world has rarely known. Then, slowly, the seeds sown by the Puritans will begin to bear fruit, until we have the England of the nineteenth century, with all its virtues, real and imputed.

Fortunately for America, republican Holland was a country of good morals, where, according to Guicciardini, the marriage vow was held in honor. Her people gave a tone to the middle colonies of America. The others were settled by Englishmen from the middle classes, who left their homes when Puritanism was in the ascendant, and happily they brought with them strict notions about the relation of the sexes. Some of

* "The Scholemaster," pp. 79, 80, etc.

these men have been ridiculed for their austerity, but they and their brothers whom they left behind them cannot be understood unless we realize the condition of society against which they protested, not only by their words but by their lives.

CHAPTER VII

ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

PUBLIC LIFE—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—TRADE—TREATMENT OF IRELAND—PIRACY

The last chapter dealt with Elizabethan England mainly from its domestic and social side. Let us now see how the men of this time look from another point of view. And first we will consider those in public life.

A few figures stand out in the Elizabethan era which would do honor to any age; chief among these are Burghley and Walsingham. It is fortunate for England and for the world that these men lived; it is largely to them that England owes her greatness. They were patriots, pure of life, incorruptible, working for their country, and not for self. Burghley was wealthy, but in his own right; from the queen he did not receive enough, he said, to cover his expenses.* Walsingham spent his fortune in the public service and died in poverty. These are the men who, with a very few others, such as Sir Francis Knollys, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and Sir Philip Sidney, are often held up to illustrate the public morality of the age; but they neither represent the officials nor the courtiers. Most of the men about them were mere parasites fattening on the nation—gamblers, spendthrifts, pardon-brokers, monopolists, and pirates.

---

* Strype's "Annals," iii. Appendix, p. 128.

For public services, however splendid or long continued, Elizabeth had scarcely a word of thanks. It must have been that, believing herself more than mortal, there was no room in her composition for such an earthly trait as gratitude. She allowed her ministers to go without reward, and her soldiers in the field to starve for want of food, apparently because she thought it their duty not only to serve her with their lives, but at their own expense. It speaks well for human nature and for the English character that she found so many willing to serve her, as the representative of their country, on these terms. Such men, however, were in a small minority, and with a few notable exceptions were not found about the court. Those who daily saw the queen discovered two modes of gaining the rewards denied to patriotic service or devotion to her interests. One was to satisfy her greed by presents of gold or jewels, no matter how acquired; the other was to feed her hunger for adulation, which was insatiable as the grave.

Historians, to excuse her conduct towards her ministers, soldiers, and all the true friends with whom she had financial dealings, say that her avarice amounted to a monomania. But her life was not controlled by avarice. The miser who heaps up treasures from mere love of acquisition denies himself as well as others; the selfish spendthrift it is who defrauds his creditors and robs his friends in order to have means for self-indulgence or display. To the parasites about her court, Elizabeth could be lavishness itself. Leicester, who began life with nothing, became the wealthiest nobleman in England. Burghley estimated that Elizabeth gave Essex, her last favorite, three hundred thousand pounds,* and this

* Hume, iii. 258.

was at a time when the country was at war with Spain, and the drains upon the public purse the most severe. Hatton, her "sheep," who danced himself into favor, was rewarded with broad acres of land and profitable sinecures, and was finally made Lord Chancellor. Others received grants of monopolies, which extended to so many articles and forms of industry as to become a grievous burden to the State, without benefit to the royal treasury.*

But the monopolies were not the worst of the abuses caused by the conduct of the queen. Men who could not get pay for honest service took pensions from France and Spain, both natural enemies of England. Officials, when out of the queen's sight, robbed the government, as they always will where the government shows no honesty in its own dealings.† Even the Church became infected. Many of the bishops plundered their dioceses, sold the lead and brick from the buildings, cut down the timber, and made grants of church property to the crown, either for a bribe in money or for a portion of the spoils. In addition, they almost openly sold the livings in their gift, the Bishop of Lichfield making seventy "lewd and unlearned ministers for money" in one day.‡

---

* Hallam's "Const. Hist." i. 260.

† See Hall, p. 68, etc., for an account of the mode in which Sir Thomas Gresham, the queen's financial agent, until recent times regarded as a model of official integrity, acquired his large fortune; and p. 122, etc., for the exploits of Sir George Carey, the Treasurer at War in Ireland. These men were shining lights in their age, far removed from the horde of petty plunderers.

‡ Froude, xii. 22; xi. 21; vii. 476. Further authorities for these statements regarding the condition of the Church will be given in Chapter IX.

The law courts were little better. In 1592, Elizabeth appointed to the office of Chief Justice of England a lawyer, John Popham, who is said to have occasionally been a highwayman until the age of thirty.* At first blush this seems incredible, but only because such false notions generally prevail regarding the character of the time. The fact is that neither piracy nor robbery was considered particularly discreditable at the court of Elizabeth. The queen knighted Francis Drake for his exploits as a pirate, and a law on the statute-books, passed in the middle of the century, gave the benefit of clergy to peers of the realm when convicted of highway robbery. Men may doubt, if they choose, the stories about Popham, but the testimony of this statute cannot be disputed.†

The elevation of a reputed highwayman to preside over the highest criminal court in the kingdom did not, however, mean that the laws were not to be enforced with rigor. In fact, Popham received the name of the "hanging judge," and well deserved the title. All the

---

* See "Life of Popham," Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices." Hall, it should be said, discredits this story as romantic gossip, p. 148.

† 1 Ed. VI. cap. 12, sec. 14 (1547). Shakespeare's contemporaries saw nothing remarkable in the fact that Sir John Falstaff, a knight, was represented as a highway robber, and that a prince was his associate. Popham is said to have left the largest fortune ever accumulated by a lawyer. Among his other possessions was Littlecote House, which he acquired in some strange way from Wild Will Darrell. Upon his death, he was succeeded by a son who kept one of the grandest establishments in England. When at home his house was full of guests, and when abroad, his wife gathered in the women of the surrounding country, and they all got drunk together. Campbell's "Life of Popham." Both died from the effects of their debauchery, after squandering the ill-gotten wealth of the Chief Justice.

judicial proceedings of the time are marked by the mixture of ferocity and corruption which characterizes a semi-barbarous condition of society. In prosecutions by the State, every barrier which the law has ever attempted to erect for the protection of innocence was ruthlessly cast down. Men were arrested without the order of a magistrate, on the mere warrant of a secretary of state or privy councillor, and thrown into prison during the pleasure of the minister. In confinement they were subjected to torture, for the rack rarely stood idle while Elizabeth was on the throne. If brought to trial, they were denied the aid of counsel and the evidence of witnesses in their behalf. Nor were they confronted with the witnesses against them, but written depositions, taken out of court and in the absence of the prisoner, were read to the jury, or rather such portions of them as the prosecution considered advantageous to its side. On the bench sat a judge holding office at the pleasure of the crown, and in the jury-box twelve men, picked out by the sheriff, who themselves were punished if they gave a verdict of acquittal.*

Well does Hallam compare the English courts of justice, in cases of treason, to the "caverns of murderers." Hentzner counted on London Bridge the heads of over thirty persons who had been executed for high treason, and he was there in a very quiet time. Concerning the Tower he has this significant remark: "N.B. It is to be noted that when any of the nobility are sent hither on the charge of high crimes punishable with death, such as treason, etc., they seldom or never recover their lib-

* "The Trial of the Earl of Somerset," by Amos; Jardine's "Life of Coke;" Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 232, 234, etc.; Wade, i. 141.

erty."* It was like the cave of the lion in the fable: all the footsteps pointed in one direction.

But it was not alone in prosecutions by the State that liberty was trampled under foot. Private individuals, for suing a wealthy nobleman or court favorite, were arrested by a secret warrant and cast into some unknown dungeon beyond the reach of legal process. Even lawyers and officers of the courts were thus imprisoned for the simple discharge of their duty to the public. These outrages, equalling anything popularly supposed to have been perpetrated in France during the worst days of the Bastile, finally aroused even the men upon the bench to an exhibition of some spirit. In 1592, eleven of the highest judges united in a petition to Lord Burghley and the chancellor, setting forth these facts, and asking that this particular grievance might be redressed, although they admitted that the queen or privy council might imprison any one at pleasure, and that the courts could not interfere. According to Hallam,† it seems probable that this petition was presented twice, first in 1591 and again in 1592. It is certainly one of the most suggestive documents of the time, being the certificate of all the judges of the higher courts to the mode in which personal liberty was utterly crushed out by the powerful and corrupt men about the throne, more than thirty years after the accession of Elizabeth. Had some foreigner made the statements contained in this paper, their truth might well be questioned; but, like the act of Parliament relating to the peers of the realm to which I have just alluded, its authority is too high to be called in question.‡

* Hentzner's "Travels," 1598. † "Const. Hist.," i. 236.

‡ See this petition as it appears in Anderson's "Reports," i. 297,

Somewhat akin to the imprisonment of men without a cause was the pardoning of criminals, which grew into a regular business around the court. Will Darrell, when in jail for murder, obtained his release by a bribe of a sum equal to at least three thousand pounds of modern money, paid to Pembroke, the immortal Sidney's brother-in-law.* An address to the queen upon the dangers of the country, presented by the council in 1579, refers to this practice in language which is deeply significant, as showing that the evils complained of did not lie at their doors. "Further, the loose, disordered administration required to be amended, and godly and learned men appointed as magistrates to do justice without partiality. The present practice of pardoning notable crimes, of pardoning piracy especially, ought to cease, and penal laws not to be dispensed with for private men's profit, a matter greatly misliked of good people."† The pardon-brokers and the men who appointed corrupt judges were evidently outside the council and directly around the queen. In 1585, the Recorder of London wrote to Burghley: "My Lord, there is a saying, when the court is farthest from London, then there is the best justice done in England. I once heard a great personage in office, yet living, say the same words. It is grown for a trade now in the court to make means for reprieves. Twenty pounds for a reprieve is nothing, though it be but for ten days."‡ A single illustration will show how this business was

---

and also in another form in Hallam, i. 235. Anderson states that after its presentation there was a marked improvement.

* Hall, p. 13. † Froude, xi. 177.

‡ Froude, xii, 20. See also Abbott's "Bacon," p. 4, for an account of how the ladies about the court dealt in pardons, making of it a

conducted, and who were the parties that benefited by it. In 1595, a certain Robert Boothe, having been sentenced by the Court of Chancery for some criminal practice, his friend Anthony Bacon, brother of Sir Francis, employed Sir Anthony Standen to negotiate his release. Standen applied to Lady Edmundes, one of the queen's attendants, the Lord Keeper Puckering having expressed a desire that the matter should be brought "to her mill," and having said to her, "Do your endeavor and you shall find me ready." In writing to Bacon concerning his negotiations, Standen reported that he had offered the noble dame a hundred pounds for her interest with the queen, which she treated as too small a sum. He adds, "This ruffianry of causes I am daily more and more acquainted with, and see the manner of dealing; which groweth by the queen's straitness to give these women, whereby they presume thus to grange and huck causes." *

The men who dealt in pardons and reprieves had a broad field of operations. The wide-spread demoralization of society is shown, if further proof were needed, by the prevalence of the crimes against person and property, which every government must punish if it would live at all. In London, highwaymen plied their vocation in open streets by daylight.† In the country were regular bands of robbers, who either settled down in some locality, whence they carried on their raids, or wandered about from place to place, levying contribu-

---

regular business, and thus obtaining the income which the queen withheld.

* Birch, "Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth," i. 354, citing original letter in Lambeth Library.

† Froude, vii. 471.

tions on the farmers.* In Somersetshire alone, forty prisoners were executed in one year (1596) for robbery and other felonies, and this record was not the highest. It was estimated that in every county of the kingdom there were at least three or four hundred vagabonds who lived by theft and rapine. They often intimidated the magistrates, and substantially ruled in some sections.†

A commission issued by Elizabeth in 1595 is suggestive of the dimensions of this evil in London, while it illustrates the utter disregard of personal liberty shown by her government shortly before the end of the century. Under this commission, Sir Thomas Wilford was directed, on notice by the magistrates, to arrest "such notable rebellious and incorrigible offenders" as he should find in the streets of London or in the suburbs, and forthwith execute them openly on the gallows.‡ No trial, no examination, simply a short rope and a shorter shrift. It may be added that this despotic measure, under which five men were hanged, had no political tumults for an excuse, but was provoked merely by a few disorders committed by some riotous apprentices and vagrants.‖

* Blackmore, in his exquisite historical romance, "Lorna Doone," gives an admirable description of one of these robber retreats of the next century. Macaulay describes the high position held by highwaymen in England as late as the close of the seventeenth century. "History of England," vol. i. chap. iii.

† Strype's "Annals," iv. 290. ‡ Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 242.

‖ In 1597, a number of peasants in Oxfordshire assembled to break down recent enclosures and restore the land to its former tillage. As this action opposed the execution of the laws, it was pronounced high treason by the court, and the rioters suffered the barbarous death of traitors. Howell's "State Trials," 1421; Lingard, viii. 298.

There is nothing strange about the prevalence of crimes against property on land, when we consider the extent to which piracy existed upon the ocean, and the mode in which it was fostered and encouraged by the queen. But before discussing this extensive subject, let us finish with the landsmen by showing how the general demoralization of society affected some portions of the manufacturing and trading classes, and how the Englishmen of that day dealt with their Irish neighbors.

For many years a coarse kind of woollen goods had been made in England, which found a wide market on the Continent. Her people could not yet dye their cloths, nor finish the finer varieties. These pursuits they began to follow only in the next century, when taught by the Netherland refugees.* For the rude undressed fabric, however, they had a good reputation until the time of the Reformation. Then, as the business increased, adulteration and fraud appeared to run rampant, culminating in the years just preceding the Spanish Armada, when "more false cloth and woollen was made in England than in all Europe besides." † It was a time when all classes, infected by the example of the men about the court, who openly paraded their ill-gotten gains, were crazed with the desire for speedy wealth.

With adulterations in their manufactured products and frauds in their commercial dealings, there was also developed a mania for gambling, such as usually accompanies a feverish condition of society. Both sexes gam-

---

* Motley's "United Netherlands," iv. 433.

† Froude, v. 259; MSS. Domestic, Dec., 1585, cited Froude, xii. 565.

bled, and they did it in curious ways which show the wide dissemination of the practice. Thus, in the accounts of shop-keepers of the time, we find frequent records of articles sold to be paid for at an enormous advance, when the purchaser returned from a distant voyage, was married, had a child, or the like.* This, of course, was only a cover for a bet. With other tradesmen the transactions were more open, the customer paying down directly a sum of money, which he was to receive back several-fold on the happening of some contingency.† This was but one form of a vice which became almost universal. As in the present day, dice and cards were the instruments most commonly used by the habitual gamesters, and there were in London more gambling houses "to honor the devil than churches to serve the living God." ‡

The most extensive form of gambling was that carried on in connection with the operations of the pirates and privateers. The ships of these worthies were usually fitted out by gentlemen "adventurers," as they were called, who sometimes lost their all, but at other times

---

* Hall's "Society in the Elizabethan Age," p. 52, etc.

† Ben Jonson, in "Every Man out of his Humour," refers to this mode of speculation, which originated among the nobility, but soon extended to the lower ranks. Says Puntarvolo, "I do intend this year of jubilee coming on to travel; and because I will not altogether go upon expense, I am determined to put forth some five thousand pounds, to be paid me five for one upon the return of myself, my wife, and my dog from the Turk's court in Constantinople. If all or either of us miscarry in the journey, 'tis gone; if we be successful, why, there will be five and twenty thousand pounds to entertain time withal."—Act ii. sc. 3.

‡ George Whetstone, 1586, quoted in Nathan Drake's "Shakespeare and his Times," p. 421.

received enormous returns on their investments.* Men for these purposes borrowed money, and a class of usurers sprang up, who formed one of the great curses of the age. Taking interest beyond ten per cent. was forbidden by statute, but means were found to evade the law. Twenty-five per cent. was a common rate,† and frequently even this was much exceeded. The Dean of York, one of the high dignitaries of the Church, was a noted usurer. We find him and his associates, in 1585, taking fifty, sixty, and sometimes a hundred per cent. interest on loans.‡ In connection with the subject of gambling and usury, and as a further symptom of the state of society in its changing conditions, it may be added that, in 1569, lotteries, long known upon the Continent, were first introduced into England, the drawings taking place at the west door of St. Paul's.

When now we add to this picture the love of strong drink, in which no one, except perhaps the Netherlanders, could rival the Englishman,§ we can form a pretty correct idea of the dark side of society in England during the Elizabethan age. Of its brighter side we shall see something when in subsequent chapters we come to con-

---

* In one expedition, planned by Raleigh, in 1592, the adventurers received ten for one, a thousand per cent. Strype's "Annals," iv. 129.

† Hall, pp. 47, 56.

‡ Strype, iii. 325. Until 1571, all interest was forbidden both by Church and State; then Elizabeth, through Parliament, fixed the legal rate at ten per cent. She also introduced judicious regulations concerning weights and measures, and gave the country an honest metallic currency, which had been unknown under her predecessors, who debased it by mixing other metals with the gold and silver.

§ Drake, p. 408. See also Hall, p. 76, etc., as to the change from the light drinks of earlier times to loaded wine and heady ale.

sider the marvellous literature of this period, its energy displayed in every quarter, and the reforms, civil and religious, advocated by the Puritans.

Let us now, after looking at the Englishman at home, see something of his character as it was exhibited in Ireland three centuries ago; and here, for our purpose, the recital of a few historical incidents will be sufficient. They will supplement what we have already seen of his moral condition, and throw some light on the opinion formed of him by foreigners.

English historians throw up their hands in natural horror at the atrocious plots of the fanatical Catholics for the assassination of Queen Elizabeth. Crimes of violence, they say, are common enough among our people; but for secret murder, especially by poison, our nation has always had a peculiar detestation. All this is true enough in general, but, in the light of some notable events in Ireland, to say nothing of what went on in England itself, one may well ask whether such statements are not a little overdrawn when applied to the Elizabethan age. As for the comparison between the Catholics in England and the Protestant English in Ireland, we must remember that the former had a religious motive. When, in 1584, the attempts were begun against the queen, she had been excommunicated by the pope, she had already put a number of Catholics to death, and the men who plotted her destruction believed that they were doing the work of God in removing a wicked woman, who was an outlaw persecuting the saints and aiding the spread of pernicious doctrines. In Ireland were a people fighting for their homes against a foreign invader. No question of religion was involved, in the early days of which I am about to speak; but the English were simply striving to

hold by the strong arm what they had won by force. Upon this point Lord Burghley, the queen's chief minister, said, in 1582, "that the people of the Netherlands had not such cause to rebel against the oppression of the Spaniards as the Irish against the tyranny of England." *

Under these conditions, in 1561, nineteen years before the Jesuits began even their religious teachings in England, and nine years before the excommunication of Elizabeth, Shan O'Neil led one of the periodical rebellions so common in the Emerald Isle. He was a brave soldier and a skilful general. In a fair fight he defeated an army led by the Earl of Sussex, the flower of English chivalry, one of Elizabeth's trusted councillors, and her deputy in Ireland. Shortly thereafter, Shan sent two of his followers to Sussex with a message concerning some military details. What followed is best told in the words of the noble English lord who thus reported to his queen:

"*August* 24th, 1561.

"May it please your Highness:

"After conference had with Shan O'Neil's seneschal, I entered talk with Neil Gray; and perceiving by him that he had little hope of Shan's conformity in anything, and that he therefore desired that he might be received to serve your Highness, for that he would no longer abide with him, and that if I would promise to receive him to your service he would do anything that I would command him, I swore him upon the Bible to keep secret that I should say unto him, and assured him if it were ever known during the time I had the government there that, besides the breach of his oath, it should cost him his life. I used long circumstance in persuading him to serve you, to benefit his country, and to procure assistance of living to him and his forever by doing of that which he might easily do. He promised to do what I would. In fine, I brake with him to kill Shan, and

* Froude, xi. 272.

bound myself by my oath to see him have a hundred marks of land by the year to him and to his heirs for his reward. * * * God send your Highness a good end.

"Your Highness's most humble and faithful servant,

"T. Sussex."

Froude, who first gave this letter to the public, mildly remarks that "English honor, like English coin, lost something of its purity in the sister island."* But this is not a transaction to be lightly dismissed. Here is the representative of the queen, himself one of the brightest ornaments of the English peerage, laboring with a trusted servant, and finally hiring him to assassinate his master, because that master is too strong an enemy in the open field, and then reporting the bargain to his royal mistress, like any other piece of business. The letter needs no comment, but deserves consideration.

No record remains, or at least has yet been found, of the answer made by Elizabeth to the report of her noble deputy. But Sussex retained his command, and, as was shown by subsequent events, could not have been discouraged by any communication received from home. Gray, either from fear or from some other reason, failed to murder his chief, who at length became so powerful that Elizabeth consented to make terms with him and to recognize his authority as virtual sovereign of Ulster. As a first evidence of cordiality, a present of a cask of wine was sent to Shan from Dublin—where Sussex had his headquarters — which, consumed at table, brought the Irish leader and half his household to the point of death. To such a mode of conducting a friendly intercourse Shan naturally objected. He made a great outcry, which probably would have been louder had he

* Froude, viii. 29.

known of the previous dealings with Gray, and demanded an investigation. This was begun, the wine was traced back to an English resident in Dublin, by the name of Smith, who admitted that he had poisoned it. Sussex denied all complicity in the attempted crime, the guilt of which Smith took upon himself; but the subordinate was never punished, and Shan as a reward for dropping the inquiry received renewed concessions.* Even with all the mystery surrounding this affair, the denial of Sussex might be of value but for his letter to Elizabeth setting forth the details of his former plot. The man who could incite a servant to assassinate his master would hardly shrink from the use of poison to accomplish the same purpose. Evidently both Elizabeth and her deputy were borne down by the consciousness of guilt.†

When a certain class of modern Englishmen feel too much oppressed with that sense of an inherited superiority which ascribes to some moral defect in the Latin

---

* Froude, viii. 50.

† See also as to Englishmen's familiarity with the use of poison, the negotiations between Lord Burghley and Woodshawe, an English gentleman honorably connected, who had been engaged in a burglary, and offered to make his peace by poisoning any one in the Netherlands whom the queen wished out of the way. Burghley, as might be expected, declined his offers. Froude, xi. 45. Some further illustrations of the mode in which Elizabeth and even Charles II. played with assassination will be given hereafter when we come to consider the alleged plots of the Jesuits for the assassination of Elizabeth herself. In connection with the general subject of poisoning, it is perhaps hardly necessary for me to refer to the stories told about Leicester and the professional poisoner in his service (see "The Puritans and Queen Elizabeth," by Hopkins), and to the exploits of the Countess of Somerset in the next reign.

races the assassinations connived at, if not incited by, the Jesuits, the poisonings at the Italian court, and the other crimes of a like character familiar to portions of the Continent in former ages, they may with much profit turn to the story of Shan O'Neil and the Earl of Sussex. When, on the other hand, they feel inclined to ascribe to the malign effects of Puritanism the actions of Cromwell in Ireland, and those of the Puritans in New England, the study of such incidents as the following may also serve a useful purpose.

In 1569, Shan O'Neil having died, and Ireland being again unsettled, it occurred to some of the adventurous spirits of England that the sister island afforded a fine field for a speculation. They therefore, to the number of twenty-seven, mostly freebooters from Devonshire and Somersetshire, proposed to the government that the whole province of Munster should be granted to them, and that they in turn would make it peaceful by, if need be, the utter extermination of the natives. This proposal excited some discussion, but only as to details, and, action on it being delayed, a new scheme was taken up.

In the previous century the Irish had driven out some of the old Norman robber families and repossessed themselves of their ancestral lands. The great-grandchildren of these ejected landlords still kept the ancient title-deeds, which were considered valuable simply as historical curiosities. Several of the original speculators—among whom were Sir Philip Carew, Sir Warham St. Leger, Sir Richard Grenville, and Humphrey Gilbert, all well-known English worthies, and prominent among the men who made the age of Elizabeth illustrious—having acquired some of these claims, set out, with a large body of retainers, to look after their properties,

without waiting for the action of the government. Arriving in Ireland, they began to take possession of their estates, and naturally enough the occupants objected. In July, Sir Philip Carew attacked the house of Sir Edward Butler, and massacred every man, woman, and child within the walls, not sparing even a little boy three years of age.*

The news of the intended extermination of the Irish having spread through the country, caused what history calls a rebellion, and Humphrey Gilbert, the American explorer, half-brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, helped to put it down. In reporting officially to his superior officer as to his "manner of dealing" with the "rebels," he says: "After my first summoning of any castle or fort, if they would not presently yield it, I would not afterwards take it of their gift, but won it perforce, how many lives soever it cost, putting man, woman, and child of them to the sword."† For these exploits, Sir Henry Sidney, the representative of the queen, and himself ranked as one of the worthies of the age, only inferior to his illustrious son, Sir Philip, conferred the honor of knighthood upon Gilbert, and reported to Cecil, "For the colonel, I cannot say enough." ‡

In 1573, the Earl of Essex went to the North of Ireland on a mission of private plunder. The next year he accepted the hospitality of one of the O'Neils, Sir Brian MacPhelim, and made him a friendly visit at Belfast.

---

* Froude, x. 502.

† Humphrey Gilbert to Sir H. Sidney, Dec., 1569, MSS. Ireland, Froude, x. 510.

‡ In 1572, Sir Humphrey Gilbert served as a volunteer in the Netherlands, and, much to the discredit of the patriots' cause, exhibited there the same ferocity which he had shown in Ireland. Froude, x. 393.

After a banquet given in honor of his guest, Sir Brian retired to a house outside the fortress walls. As soon as he was asleep, Essex set upon him with a company of soldiers, and murdered two hundred of his attendants, male and female, the chief, his wife, and brother being taken alive and reserved for execution.* Hearing of this transaction, the queen wrote to the earl that "he was a great ornament of her nobility." †

Incited by her praises, he now did an act which stands out almost unique in history.

On the coast of Antrim, not far from the Giant's Causeway, is the romantic island of Rathlin, famous as the abode of Saint Columba, and as containing the castle in which Robert Bruce watched the persevering spider. With steep, precipitous sides, broken only at a single point, filled with caves and protected by the sea, it was always a camp of refuge, being invested with something of a sacred character. In 1575, Essex invaded Antrim to put down a petty insurrection. Upon his approach the insurgents sent their wives and children, sick and aged, to this island retreat. The active hostilities amounted to little; peace was soon restored, and the English commander began his march back to Dublin. On the way he was informed of the precious colony which was occuping Rathlin. He forthwith halted, and sent a company of soldiers, led by John Norris, second son of Lord Norris—Francis Drake being one of his officers ‡—to take possession of the island, with directions to kill whatever they should find.

They found a few able-bodied men in Bruce's castle, who had been sent with the women as a guard. This

---

* Froude, xi. 200. † Idem, xi. 202.

‡ See "Dictionary of National Biography," article "Devereux."

little band could make no defence against the cannon which Norris had brought with him. The place was soon taken by assault, and every human being within the walls slaughtered, except the chief and his family, who were probably reserved for ransom. The victims here numbered two hundred, all non-combatants, save the score or so of the garrison. It was then discovered that the caves along the shore contained several hundred others, mostly women and little children. These cowering and helpless objects of pity the English warriors proceeded to ferret out, putting them every one to death. When the work was finished, not a woman or babe was left alive. Essex reported to the queen that the rebel chiefs had sent their women and children to the island, "which he had taken, and executed to the number of six hundred." The leading rebel, "yellow-haired Charley Macconnell," he said, "stood upon the mainland and saw the taking of the island, and was likely to have run mad for sorrow, tearing and tormenting himself, and saying that he there lost all that ever he had." For this act, Essex took great credit to himself, and Elizabeth directed him to say to Norris, "the executioner of his well-designed enterprise, that she would not be unmindful of his services." *

These are but illustrations of what the English did in Ireland long before there was any pretext of a religious war or Spanish intrigues, and when they were bent simply on plundering the natives, as Cortez had done in Mexico and Pizarro in Peru half a century before. Well may Lecky say that the Englishmen in Ireland surpassed the ferocity of Alva in the Netherlands.†

Lodge says that Sussex, who plotted the assassination

---

* Froude, xi. 206. † "England in the Eighteenth Century," ii. 104.

of O'Neil, was as "brave as Raleigh, with the piety of a primitive Christian."* A modern New England writer calls him "one of the children of God."† Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who was lost in the Atlantic on his return from America in 1583, left to the world the memorable saying, "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land." Froude says of Essex, who died shortly after his exploit at Rathlin, and whose widow married Leicester, that he "was one of the noblest of living Englishmen."‡ So he doubtless was; he was also a religious man, and, as we have seen, was deeply grieved over the universal wickedness in England. But these being the best, what shall we think of their countrymen at large? It is the very goodness of these men, and their manifest unconsciousness that they have done anything inconsistent with their character as Christians or soldiers, that throw the most light on their condition.§

But Ireland furnished only limited opportunities for the exhibition of the character of Englishmen when brought into contact with men of other nationalities. To complete the full outline of the picture, we must now turn to a broader field.

In the preceding pages, frequent mention has been

---

* "Illustrations of British History" (London, 1791), i. 367.

† "The Puritans and Queen Elizabeth," Hopkins, 1875, ii. 324.

‡ Froude, xi. 219.

§ In selecting the material for this and the preceding chapter, I have gone, not to the writings of the Puritans or satirists, but to official documents and the works of standard English scholars. For my illustrations I have chosen incidents, not in the lives of disreputable characters, such as can be found in all ages of the world, but, with few exceptions, in those of men who come down to us as representing among their contemporaries the very flower of English Christianity and civilization.

made of the pirates who form so important an element of society in the Elizabethan age; but the subject is one which deserves much more than a passing notice. In fact, no sketch of the period would be complete which omitted an account of the growth of the industry which these heroes developed, for they were the men who laid the foundation of England's naval greatness. In addition, their spoliations upon the sea had as marked an influence upon the manners and morals of the time as the plundering of the monasteries on the land, and it was largely through connivance at their practices that Elizabeth was finally forced, against her will, into the contest between the Netherlands and Spain.

The close of the fifteenth and the opening of the sixteenth century witnessed upon the Continent of Europe an outburst of commercial activity as remarkable as the revival of art and letters which has made that age so famous. England, however, took as little part in the one as in the other. Her commerce was almost wholly in the hands of French, Italian, German, and Netherland merchants, while her people upon the land devoted themselves mainly to raising wool, and those upon the sea to catching fish. About her only contribution to the early explorations, which the mariner's compass now rendered possible, were the discoveries of John and Sebastian Cabot, who sailed under English colors.

John Cabot was a Venetian merchant, doing business at Bristol. In 1497, with five vessels fitted out at his own expense, he set sail across the Atlantic, under a patent from Henry VII., to search for countries "which were before that time unknown to all Christian people," the exclusive privilege of trading with such countries being reserved unconditionally, and without limit of

time, to his family and their assigns.* On this first voyage the mainland in the vicinity of Labrador was sighted, and in the next year Sebastian, the son, coasted along the American continent to about the southern boundary of Maryland, or perhaps a little farther to the south. Nothing, however, came from either of these voyages. England at that time was in communion with the Church of Rome, and, in 1493, Pope Alexander VI. had issued a bull which, as then construed, granted the whole American continent to Spain and Portugal. Upon the return of the Cabots, it was evident that their alleged discoveries lay within the boundaries of the papal grant, and the English monarch appears from that time to have abandoned all thought of acquiring the sovereignty of unknown countries.†

---

* Hazard's "Hist. Coll.," pp. 1–9.

† The theory of an English title to America, by virtue of Cabot's discoveries, was first advanced about 1580 by Dr. Dee, who was followed by Hakluyt; but it was never accepted by the government. Before the Reformation, England never questioned the exclusive rights of Spain; but when the authority of the pope was set aside she began to pick flaws in the papal grant. Still, the fact was admitted that Spain had discovered America several years before the voyage of Cabot. Little, therefore, was said about his voyage, but England advanced the doctrine that actual occupation must follow discovery, or no title could be acquired. This was Elizabeth's maxim in 1580, when speaking to the Spanish ambassador. "Prescriptio sine possessione haud valeat" (Camden). The letters-patent under which Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed and took possession of Newfoundland, in 1583, were based upon this legal principle. They made no reference to Cabot, but authorized Gilbert to discover, occupy, and possess "such remote heathen lands, not actually possessed of any Christian prince or people, as should seem good to him." The patent to Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1584–85, was of the same character. Hazard, i. 24–33. The Virginia Charter of 1606 restricted colonization to lands "which are

The discoveries of the Venetian Cabots are of interest to the historians of early American explorations; but they awakened little enthusiasm in England, and produced no effect upon her commerce. That went on as before, being mostly in the hands of foreigners, and limited to a very narrow field, which no one thought of broadening.*

Very different were the results which followed the explorations undertaken by the sailors of Portugal and Spain. In 1498, Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and about the same time another Portuguese discovered a way to India by the Isthmus of Suez. Shortly afterwards, their countrymen established at Goa the first European factory in India, and began a commerce which soon grew to large proportions.† Spain in the same way improved her discoveries in the New World. She worked the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Peru, the pearl fisheries of the coast, and the sugar plantations on the islands in the tropics. The colonists shipped to the mother country, which monopolized the whole carrying trade, their surplus products of the fields

---

not now actually possessed by any Christian prince or people," and the Plymouth patent of 1620 contained the same restriction. In 1621, the House of Commons declared the principle that "occupancy confers a good title by the law of nations and nature." Chalmers's "Political Annals," i. 10. This was always the doctrine of James I. Gardiner's "History of England," iii. 40.

* Froude, viii. 435. Several patents were issued to English explorers after the return of the Cabots, but they came to nothing. "English Colonies in America" (Virginia, Maryland, etc.), by J. A. Doyle, p. 26, etc.

† It was in 1600, more than a century later, that the English East India Company was organized, on a very small scale; and then no factory was established for ten or eleven years.

and woods, and in return took the manufactured products of the European looms and workshops. So rapidly did the commerce of Spain develop that at the time of her greatest prosperity she had a thousand merchantmen upon the ocean.*

In one direction England felt the effects of the new markets opened up in America and the East Indies. They increased the demand for her wool and cheap woollen goods, and so raised their prices. In return, she imported so much from the Continent, especially in the way of luxuries—the consumption of wine, for example, having increased fourfold in a few years—that old and conservative statesmen became alarmed. Still, this new trade was mostly carried on by foreigners, and little benefited English shipping. When Henry VIII. broke with the pope, he concluded to strengthen himself upon the ocean, and made some attempts to establish a navy. How little was accomplished is shown by the fact that, upon the accession of Elizabeth, the whole naval force in commission amounted to seven coast-guard vessels, the largest of which was only one hundred and twenty tons, with eight small merchant brigs and schooners altered for fighting. Of ships in harbor fit for service there were twenty-one.†

---

* In 1582, England had no more than two hundred and seventeen vessels above eighty tons burden. Wade, i. 148. The Spaniards studied navigation as a science. The "Contraction House" at Seville was virtually a college of navigation, giving instruction and conferring degrees. Henry VIII. attempted something of the kind in England, but the results were paltry. Doyle, p. 33. In the latter days of Elizabeth, Englishmen needed no colleges of navigation; their school was the ocean.

† Froude, vii. 59.

Upon the fishing industry of England the Reformation produced the most disastrous effects. Under the old religion, no meat was allowed to any one on fast-days, and these made up nearly a third of the year. Now the eating of fish was looked on with some suspicion as a token of papistical inclinations, and meat was ostentatiously displayed, even on Fridays and in Lent. Thus it came about that, while France sent annually five hundred vessels to the Newfoundland fishing-banks, even the home fisheries around the English coast fell into the hands of foreigners.* Hence with an increasing trade and growing wealth, the port towns were strangely enough falling into decay.†

Taking all the facts of the situation into account, the outlook for English shipping did not seem very brilliant. In fact, it was so gloomy that the wise and far-sighted Cecil thought of it with serious apprehension. Something must be done, he said, to build up a fleet

---

* When Sir Humphrey Gilbert went to Newfoundland in 1583, and took possession of the country in the name of Elizabeth, as an unknown land, he found there thirty-six vessels of other nations engaged in catching fish. Doyle, p. 50.

† A very interesting account of the condition of English commerce in 1552 is given in a letter addressed to Cecil by Thomas Barnaby, a merchant, and one of the foreign agents of Edward VI. It is among the Cecil manuscripts; a copy will be found in the appendix to Strype's "Ecclesiastical Memorials," ii. 151. He states that the French had more sailors in a single town than the English had in all their southern sea-ports; that even English coal was exported wholly in French vessels; and that all the maritime towns of England were going to decay. He stated that if the coal-trade could be restricted to English ships, employment would be found for six or seven thousand sailors. Cecil, when he became minister under Elizabeth, tried in vain to carry out some of Barnaby's suggestions.

and to educate a race of sailors. After his custom he set down in writing his views upon this subject, and the paper, prepared in the first years of Elizabeth's reign, still exists. Three means occurred to him for the encouragement of mariners: first, "merchandise;" second, "fishing;" third, "the exercise of piracy, which was detestable and could not last."* To carry out his ideas, he proposed a "Navigation act" placing foreign ships under disabilities; but this was not to come for nearly a century, when it proved a great success. Then he tried to make the people eat fish by means of an act of Parliament; but this scheme was unpopular, and it had to be abandoned. Nothing now was left but the piracy, so detestable to the statesman, but so congenial to the Englishmen at large. Despite Cecil's prophecy it did last, and on it was built up Britain's naval greatness.

The practice began at the time of the Marian persecutions, when a number of men from the best families took to the sea as roving chiefs. Upon the accession of Elizabeth, most of the leaders returned home and obtained places under government. But their crews remained behind, and to them were added the large number of fishermen thrown out of employment by the ruin of their business. The increase of trade made piracy profitable, and it gradually attracted to itself most of the wild and adventurous spirits of the country. The result was that within a few years England occupied towards the North of Europe much the same position that Algiers occupied towards the South, her people levying contributions on all the world.†

---

* Trade notes, Domestic MSS. Eliz. vol. xli. Rolls House, cited by Froude, viii. 445.

† "As the modern gentleman keeps his yacht, so Elizabeth's loyal

It has been much the fashion to speak of the corsairs who gave England her supremacy upon the sea as if they were men inflamed by a zeal for Protestantism, who, to revenge the atrocities of the Inquisition, levied private war on Spain. But such a view of the facts has only a tinge of truth, for it reverses the order of events. The English piracies came first, then followed the retributions of Spain, and lastly the fiery indignation of the Englishman which had such a marked effect on European history.

Long and earnestly did Spain, whose king was friendly to England, labor to keep the peace. The English minister at Madrid expostulated with his government, described the outrages committed on Spanish commerce, and foretold the certainty of retaliation; but it was all in vain. The old wild blood was up, the blood which coursed through the veins of Saxon, Dane, and Norseman. After the lapse of centuries, the Englishman had again found his natural element and calling. Friend and foe, Protestant and Romanist, Dutchman, Frenchman, Portuguese, and Spaniard, all were plundered alike. It was not war, but simple pillage and murder. In 1563, long before hostilities with Spain were thought of, a Spanish vessel sailed from Flanders with a cargo valued at eighty thousand ducats. Thomas Cobham, son of Lord Cobham of Cowling Castle, chanced to be cruising in the Channel. Catching sight of the vessel, he chased her down into the Bay of Biscay, fired into her, killed a number of the crew, and boarding, after all resistance had ceased, sewed up the survivors in their own sails

---

burghers, squires, or knights, whose inclination led that way, kept their ambiguous cruisers, and levied war on their own account when the government lagged behind its duty."—Froude, viii. 449.

and threw them overboard. Then, scuttling the ship, he made off with the booty to his pirate den in the South of Ireland.* Even the inoffensive Dutch fishermen, although Protestants, did not escape, and perhaps they were the worst sufferers of all. The English constantly boarded their fishing smacks, took out everything, down even to the clothing of the men, and left them naked to drift at the mercy of the waves.

Of course, the government had, at times, to make a pretence of prosecuting the offenders; but, remembering the way in which justice was then administered, the farcical results can be readily imagined. Cobham, the year after the exploit above narrated, was tried for piracy in London, at the urgent demand of the Spanish minister. The evidence against him was complete, but he escaped conviction in the usual manner, and was soon back at his old occupation. In 1566, the English authorities, while trying to excuse their conduct towards Spain, were forced to admit that they had never executed a single pirate.†

Thus the industry grew and flourished. The English allowed other people to catch their fish; they helped themselves after the hauls were made. They permitted the Netherlanders to manufacture all the finer products of the loom, content to take their share, in the good old way, after the work was done. Nearly every gentleman along the western coast, whether Protestant or Catholic, was engaged in the business. Their manor houses were filled with the spoils of their cruisers, and the surplus went to London, where the pirates sunned themselves in the rays of royal favor. The occupation

---

* Froude, viii. 460.

† Idem, viii. 478.

had come to stay. The men who beat off the Spanish Armada did a noble work for England and the world, but they were pirates none the less. Throughout the entire reign of Elizabeth they were preying on the commerce of their Dutch allies; and Henry IV. of France, in 1603, declined an invitation to visit England, from fear that they would capture him while crossing the Channel.*

If now it seems strange that the Continental powers permitted this piracy to flourish so long in England, we must remember that it continued in Algiers, her rival in the business, down to the year 1830, despite the combined efforts of all Christendom. The one was protected by the Mediterranean and the sands of Africa, the other by the broad "deep ditch" which divided her from the Continent.

Out of her piracies in the Channel and along the coast grew up England's slave-trade and this led to piratical expeditions on the wider scale, to be followed by results of great moment. From quite an early day the Portuguese explorers of Africa had carried on a slave-trade with the natives. It began about 1442, when ten black men, who had been exchanged for some Moorish captives, were brought to Portugal and astonished the Europeans by their color. Thenceforward negroes, both bond and free, were quite common in the cities of the Peninsula, although the traffic in human flesh was not extensive, since, at the close of the century, the number of blacks exported from Africa did not exceed a few hundred annually.† They were mostly used as house-servants, nothing in the soil or climate

* Motley's "United Netherlands," iv. 146–151.

† Helps's "Spanish Conquests in America," i. 43–86, Harper's ed.

tempting the agriculturist to employ them on the land. Unfortunately, the discovery of the New World opened up a field of a different character, one in which slave labor was very profitable, while even misguided philanthropy lent its aid to aggravate the evil.

It is an error, long ago exploded, to suppose that negro slavery was first introduced into America through the efforts of Las Casas. It existed there before his time, but he, unhappily, gave to its growth a great and sudden impetus. Deeply impressed with the sufferings of the Indians, who, reduced to substantial slavery by the Spaniards, were forced to a labor in the mine and field to which they were unaccustomed, the large-hearted but too enthusiastic churchman thought that he saw a solution of the difficulty. Bring in the negro, and the problem would be solved. He was docile, accustomed to labor, ignorant, brutal, and in every respect of a very different character from the gentle, half-civilized inhabitants of Mexico or Peru. He was also a heathen, and his residence among Christians would be of advantage to his soul. It was largely upon this recommendation, made in 1517, that the trade was expanded, and that negro slaves were sent into the colonies by thousands.*

Las Casas lived long enough to repent of the advice which he had given, and it is greatly to the credit of the government of Spain that her officials used every effort to repair the wrong which had been innocently done. Even from the outset the Spanish law had thrown around the negro safeguards unknown among other nations. The slave had secured to him a part of every week, when his time was his own. He could insist upon his freedom when able to purchase it; he could own property in his

* Helps, ii. 21, 22.

own right; and the records of the Spanish colonies of the sixteenth century prove that many a negro, who went there as a slave, rose to the position of a free and successful planter.* Still, the law was ineffectual to protect the negro, however stringent were its regulations for his welfare. The slaves were abundant and cheap, and their lives of little value to an owner working an unhealthy mine or plantation where the profits of labor were enormous.

In this condition of affairs, the home government adopted a policy apparently well calculated to check the growing evil. It determined to enhance the value of the slaves and thus make it to the interest of the master to preserve their health. Hence the governors of the colonies were instructed to prevent the importation of negroes, unless under a license from Spain, which was expensive and charily given, while a duty of thirty ducats on each slave still further increased his price.†

---

* Helps. A very erroneous impression seems to prevail in regard to the conduct of the Spanish government, not only towards the negro, but towards the native population in America. In relation to the latter it has been justly remarked that "none of the European powers manifested so sincere a purpose to promote the welfare of a conquered people. The rulers of Spain were continually enacting laws, which erred only in being more just and wise than the country in its disordered condition was able to receive. They continually sought to protect the Indians by regulations extending to the minutest detail, and conceived in a spirit of thoughtful and even tender kindness."—Mackenzie's "America," title "South America," chap. iii. In all this work the Church of Rome did noble service. The difficulty was that the colonists, wild, reckless, and roaming over a boundless continent in search of gold, could not be restrained. It is to the individuals, and not to the government, that we should impute the crimes which disgrace our human nature.

† Froude, viii. p. 482.

About the same time the Church of Rome, awakened to the horrors of the traffic, thundered its imprecations on the Europeans who should enslave their fellow-man, whether African or Indian. It even became usual for a Spanish vessel sailing on a voyage of discovery to carry a priest, in order to prevent the kidnapping of the aborigines.*

It was at this juncture that England, with her long practice in piracy, stepped in to take up the trade which the papal world began to loathe. Her mariners and statesmen made no pretence of doing missionary work; they professed no motives of philanthropy. To be sure they besought the aid of Heaven; but it was for themselves, and not for their victims. They had but one object: to exchange human flesh for gold. They made England the great slave-trader of the world, forcing the curse upon her American colonies, despite their continued protests and entreaties, down to the very year that gave to the United States a separate existence.†

The first English slave expedition of importance was undertaken by John Hawkins in 1562. He sailed for the coast of Africa with three vessels and a hundred men, collected three hundred negroes, "partly by the sword and partly by other means," and then crossed the Atlantic to St. Domingo. There, through false representations to the governor, he sold two thirds of his

---

* Bancroft, i. 172.

† It is estimated that in the single century before the Declaration of Independence, England kidnapped from Africa over three million human beings, of whom more than a quarter of a million were thrown into the Atlantic. Bancroft, iii. 411. See this author as to the numerous laws passed in the American colonies against the further introduction of negro slaves, all of which were vetoed in England as detrimental to English prosperity.

cargo at a large profit, and invested the proceeds in hides, half of which he shipped to Spain, returning with the other half to England.* The Spanish monarch was greatly incensed when he heard of these transactions. Not only did they violate the law common to all countries, and always particularly insisted on by England, under which trade with the colonies was reserved to the mother country, but they threatened a serious interference with his scheme for ameliorating the condition of the negro. The vessel which Hawkins sent to Spain was seized, its cargo confiscated—the captain barely escaping the Inquisition—and an order was despatched to the West Indies that no English vessel should be allowed to trade there, under any pretence whatsoever. So earnest was the government, and so decided the expressions of the king, that the English ambassador wrote to Elizabeth urging her most strongly to prevent the recurrence of such violations of law.

The answer was a second expedition, in which Lord Pembroke and other members of the council were shareholders, while the queen supplied a ship, the *Jesus of Lubeck*. This time Hawkins kidnapped four hundred Africans. It was a dangerous business, for the ignorant negroes did not appreciate the benefits which these Christians intended for them, and at times made a stout resistance. However, God, the Englishmen said, was on their side,† and the voyage proved a great success. The Spanish governors objected to the landing of any blacks in their colonies, but English cannon overcame such scruples; the cargo was disposed of, and Hawkins returned

* Hakluyt's "Voyages," vol. iii.

† See the report of the voyage in Hakluyt, where evidence is given of the protecting care of the Almighty, "who never suffers his elect to perish."

home, to divide sixty per cent. profits among his shareholders, with a handsome allowance to the queen.*

The third of Hawkins's voyages had a very different ending—one that fired the English heart. The King of Spain, after the second expedition, had raised such an outcry that Elizabeth was obliged to promise that nothing of the kind should occur again. According to her mode of keeping such engagements, she, in 1567, again placed the *Jesus* at the disposal of Hawkins, who sailed for Africa with four more ships, all powerfully armed, taking with him a young kinsman, Francis Drake. Running down as far as Sierra Leone, the vessels were speedily loaded with all the negroes they would hold. In carrying out this laudable enterprise, Hawkins, according to his own statement, set fire to a city, the huts of which were covered with dry palm leaves, and out of eight thousand inhabitants succeeded in seizing two hundred and fifty.†

Crossing the Atlantic, he now added the occupation of a pirate to that of a slave-merchant. The result was, that from the sale of his cargoes, and the plunder of such unarmed vessels as he met along the coast, he accumulated an enormous treasure.‡ As his vessels needed repairs, and he had still four hundred negroes undisposed of, he put into the harbor of St. Jean de Luz. Unfortunately, the Spanish admiral, who for some time had been on the lookout for these pirates, entered the harbor with a fleet of nineteen vessels, opened fire upon them, and compelled Hawkins and his sailors to aban-

---

* Froude, viii. 491. † Hakluyt, iii. 618, 619.

‡ He estimated it at nearly two million pounds, mostly in gold, silver, and precious stones; probably a great exaggeration. Hakluyt, iii. 620.

don their plunder and take to sea in two small tenders. The next day, a hundred of the crew left their comrades, who were short of water and provisions, and, being put on shore, were captured by the Spaniards and carried to Mexico. The remainder, with Hawkins and Drake, took their sad way across the Atlantic, bearing with them their tale of woe and the ineffaceable remembrance of their bitter wrongs.

They reached home just in the nick of time. Some French privateers, as we have seen in a former chapter, had driven into the English harbors a number of vessels carrying money borrowed by Philip from Italian bankers, for the payment of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands. Elizabeth had been a little undecided as to her duty towards a friendly power whose property was thus providentially placed within her reach. On hearing, however, of the enormous loss which she had sustained at the hands of the Spaniards across the ocean, all her hesitation vanished. She helped herself to the Spanish silver, with a consciousness of well-doing that would have reflected honor on any of the pirates of her realm.*

How this high-handed act of robbery affected the Netherlands we have already seen. It led to Alva's proclamation of non-intercourse with England, which for a time consolidated the manufacturing and commercial classes of the country in their opposition to Spain. But its effects upon England were no less marked. Non-intercourse with the Netherlands threw all business into confusion, and at first seemed to threaten wide-spread and permanent disaster. In the end, however, it was productive of great good. The English maritime and trading spirit was aroused, never to sleep again. Shut

* Froude, ix. 371.

out temporarily from the markets of the Netherlands, the English producers began to seek markets for themselves, and they found that there was a profit in legitimate commerce, as well as in preying on their neighbors. From this time forward they sought to compete with Spain and the Netherlands for the carrying trade of the world.*

In the first excitement attending these wholesale acts of reprisal, an open war appeared inevitable. Burghley, Elizabeth's prime minister, was in favor of it, believing that the time had come for a Protestant coalition against Spain. But Elizabeth, with her habitual dislike of extreme measures, and having her own scheme of self-preservation, held back, and began to apologize for her recent conduct. On the other hand, Philip, as soon as his first irritation had subsided, also felt pacific. About the last advice which he had received from his astute father was to keep on friendly terms with England. With France he was in a chronic state of war, and the revolt in the Netherlands was daily becoming more

* The Royal Exchange in London was opened to the public in 1568, but it was some years before it was much used. It was founded by Sir Thomas Gresham, who was for a long period the financial agent of Elizabeth in the Netherlands. Deriving the idea of a merchants' exchange from that country, he copied to a large extent the exchange at Antwerp in his building, and imported an architect, carpenters, and most of his material from Flanders. We find from Gresham's correspondence that he also imported for Lord Burghley, who was then building a new country-house, paving-stones, wainscot-galleries, chairs, and wagons. Commenting on these facts, his biographer somewhat naïvely says: "It is quite surprising to perceive to what an extent, at this period, an English edifice was indebted to Continental artificers, not merely for its decorations, but for its most material features."—Burgon's "Life of Gresham," ii. 115, 116, 178. Such writers fail to recognize the condition of England.

threatening. He therefore smothered his anger, and made a pretence of believing the excuses of Elizabeth, which never deceived any one, except perhaps herself.

Although Elizabeth, when confronted with the peril of an open war, was ready enough to make excuses and promises to Philip, she could never bring herself, even if she had the power, to suppress the private war which her subjects were carrying on by sea. It is a great mistake, however, as I have already suggested, to look upon this contest, at least in its early stages, as a Protestant warfare. Elizabeth herself fully sympathized with Alva, and rejoiced over his successes in the Netherlands.* Her subjects, too, had at first as little religious feeling as she had herself. The Catholics were in a majority on the western coast of England, where the pirates had their headquarters. In 1569 they sent thirty thousand pounds to Coligny to support the Huguenot cause in France, because their privateers were sailing under his colors, and preying on the commerce of their fellow-Catholics of France and Spain. Still, the Protestant leaven was at work, and the world was to advance even through English greed.

We have seen how Hawkins, in his last unfortunate expedition, left behind him in Mexico about a hundred of his crew who fell into the hands of the Spaniards. Most of them were sent to Spain, and there turned over to the Inquisition, gentle means having failed to suppress their practices. Subjected to the rack, their nominal Protestantism gave way, and almost all of them recanted. Still, recantation did not save them from punishment for piracy, and the story was brought to England of the cruelties to which they were subjected. It

* Froude, ix. 325.

is greatly to the credit of Hawkins and the other leading corsairs of the time that they never deserted their comrades when in trouble. Their wild life, and wild enough it was, never dulled the deep affection for men of their own blood which has always characterized the Anglo-Saxon race. In the frozen seas of the North, in the jungles of India, or in the deserts of Africa, the Englishman has always faced death with unflinching courage when the rescue of a countryman has been involved. Hawkins, to release his comrades, ventured into the very jaws of the Inquisition. Pretending to be a traitor to Elizabeth, and armed with a letter from Mary of Scotland, who was then a prisoner of her royal cousin, he went to Spain, deceived Philip himself, and returned with such of his crew as were still alive. The King of Spain expected them to be his allies, but they were soon at sea again under the old flag, each one with his tale of Spanish cruelty to fire the hearts of his comrades, and to nerve himself to new schemes of vengeance.

For about three years after the affair of the Italian money, Elizabeth seemed to feel some alarm for fear that she had gone too far; but in 1572 she took part in an expedition which sailed under the command of a hero who was destined to a fame much wider than that of the great Hawkins himself.

Francis Drake had accompanied Hawkins on his last ill-starred voyage, and could never forget the sufferings of his companions who had been taken by the Spaniards, nor cease to dream of the treasures which had once been within his grasp. Sailing from Plymouth, with the queen as one of his partners, he spent the summer in the West Indies, murdering Spaniards and plundering their houses. Then crossing to the mainland, he inter-

cepted the treasure-train on the Isthmus of Panama, and after securing an enormous amount of gold and silver set sail for England, which he reached in safety, capturing another gold-ship on the return voyage.*

This expedition proved how vulnerable was Spain in her transatlantic possessions. The field of operations for the adventurers of England was expanding. Drake was soon to open to them all the oceans of the world. In 1577, he set out from Plymouth for a voyage to the Pacific, whose waters he had looked upon when he visited the Isthmus of Panama. He now sailed with a fleet of five small vessels, the queen being again his partner, and the Earl of Leicester one of his large stockholders. His commission was equivocal; Elizabeth, as usual, intending to repudiate him if it seemed to her advantage. On his part, however, there was no uncertainty of purpose.

This famous voyage lasted for three years, and its story reads like a romance. Creeping down the coast of South America, Drake passed through the Strait of Magellan. There the last of his companions deserted him, and he found himself on the waters of the broad Pacific with only eighty men and a single little vessel of one hundred and twenty tons' burden, about half the size of one of our fishing schooners which sail to Newfoundland from the ports of Maine. Making his way northward, he plundered the Spanish villages on the coast; seized great heaps of silver which had been brought down from the mines of Peru; captured a treasure-ship with its cargo of gold, silver, pearls, emeralds, and diamonds; and, almost without firing a shot or striking a blow, loaded down his vessel with a cargo such as

* Froude, xi. 31.

the world had never seen before, and never has seen since his day. Then, turning westward, he continued his furrow around the globe, crossed the Pacific, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and, in 1580, dropped anchor in Plymouth with his precious freight.*

What was its value no one ever knew. The Spanish ambassador threatened immediate war unless it was returned, and Elizabeth made a show of having it inventoried and safely guarded. But the officers who took the inventory were directed not to be too particular, and not to interfere with Drake if he wished to take any portion for himself. In the queen's council, opinion was divided as to the disposition of the plunder. Some were in favor of giving it up to Spain; others believed in sending it to the Prince of Orange or to the Huguenots in France. Elizabeth settled the controversy by making a liberal allowance to Drake, giving the shareholders who fitted out the expedition one hundred per cent. on their investment, and keeping the remainder for herself.†

The vessel which had sailed around the world was taken to London and placed on exhibition.‡ In its cabin, Elizabeth dined with Drake, and took the occasion to knight him for his exploits. He, in return, gave her a diamond cross, and a crown set with enormous emeralds. Most of her courtiers also became the recipients of his bounty. Three, however—Sussex, Walsingham, and Burghley—who believed in war and not in

---

* Magellan's vessel, with fifteen of its crew, had made the same trip half a century before.

† Froude, xi. 428.

‡ Hentzner saw it there in 1598. He speaks of it as the ship of "that noble pirate, Francis Drake."

private pillage, declined his gifts, the latter saying that he did not see how in conscience he could receive presents from a man who had nothing but what he had made by piracy.*

But the conscientious scruples of Burghley were not shared by the people at large. To them Drake was a hero, and well might they admire his character. He was far from being a vulgar pirate, like some of his predecessors, cruising merely for plunder, and robbing friend and foe alike. He was a crusader of the modern type, possessing the qualities which have always excited the just admiration of his countrymen. He had a love of adventure, was of unflinching courage, had unbounded confidence in himself, and an unalterable belief that no one in the world was a match for an Englishman. He was also a religious man, as religion then went among the majority of men in Europe. On his famous voyage around the world, he took a chaplain with him, as the Spaniards took a priest, who regularly administered the communion to the crew. He was an earnest Protestant, at least from a civil standpoint, and probably thought that by plundering the papists he was doing good service, not only to the State but to the Lord.

The voyages of Drake gave a great impetus to English Protestantism. More than ever before, the ocean swarmed with the corsairs, who were willing to face even the Inquisition in their search for Catholic gold. But it was not merely a mercenary spirit which in the end animated these rovers of the sea. It is, of course, absurd to invest them with a religious character, but it would be

---

* Froude, xi. 429. It must be remembered by the reader that all through this period England was at peace with Spain, and Elizabeth was resolutely opposed to open war.

equally absurd to ignore the spirit of patriotism which was growing more intense among them with every passing year.

Spain, to be sure, was at peace with England, but she was gradually coming to be recognized as the great foe of human liberty. On the other hand, although Elizabeth cared nothing for principles and was anxious only to save herself, the people at large knew little of the vacillations, the inclinations to the papacy, the breaches of faith, and treachery to her friends which the state-papers now reveal, and which were the chief causes of her peril. She imposed few taxes, she was popular in her manners, and she gave her country peace. To her people, who underneath the surface had noble characteristics, she represented a principle, that of nationality; and, as a Protestant sovereign, an idea—that of hatred of the papists, and of Spain, their leading champion. Every corsair who set out in search of Spanish plunder returned more of an Englishman than ever; his island home was dearer to him, for it protected him from all his enemies; his sovereign he worshipped, for she was the good genius of his fortunes. Each one, also, brought back his tale of the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Inquisition. These actions, so far as Englishmen were concerned, might be justified legally as fair reprisals, but such a consideration would have no effect upon this people. Their rulers might stretch Jesuits upon the rack, or consign heretic Dutchmen to the flames, but it was an inexpiable offence for a foreign power thus to treat an Englishman.*

* A notable, but by no means an exceptional, illustration of this national trait is found in Strype's "Annals of the Reformation." This industrious writer, who made his compilations in the early part

Step by step the irrepressible conflict is coming on. Little by little England is feeling her strength, and preparing for the grand outburst of national energy which followed the annihilation of the Spanish Armada and

---

of the eighteenth century, was a High-churchman, and an unwavering admirer of Elizabeth and her ecclesiastical policy. He describes, with apparent satisfaction, the burning at the stake, in 1575, of two Anabaptists from Holland; men who made no disturbance, but, meeting quietly for private worship, were arrested, and, on being questioned, avowed opinions which the Church called heretical. He also tells with approval of the execution, in 1580 and 1581, of a number of Jesuit priests, who, before trial, were subjected to torture, their nails torn out, and their arms racked into helplessness, all for preaching in secret the doctrines of their faith. Neither these transactions, nor the subsequent executions of scores of other Catholics and Separatists, elicit from our venerable author one word of human pity; but in 1581 an English Protestant was burned at the stake in Rome, and concerning his fate we find the following language:

"But there happened this year an example of papal persecution, in Rome, upon an Englishman, which exceeded much any persecution complained of in England." The victim of this persecution was one Richard Atkins, of whose doings Strype himself gives this account. Burning with religious zeal, he left his own country, and went to Rome, to expose the wickedness of the pope and the idolatry of the people. In carrying out his enterprise, he first visited the English College there, rebuked the students for the great misorders of their lives, called the mass a "filthy sacrament," and denounced the pope as the Antichrist who was "poisoning the whole world with his abominable blasphemies." For these speeches he was arrested, but after a few days' confinement was set at liberty. Next, he attacked a priest who was carrying the Host through the streets, and attempted to take away the sacred emblem. This offence, too, was overlooked. At last, he went to St. Peter's during mass, pushed his way to the altar, seized the chalice, throwing the wine upon the ground, and struggled with the priest to take away the consecrated wafer. This last exploit led to his martyrdom, and to Strype's denunciation of "papal persecution." Strype's "Annals," iii. 38.

gave the country a new life. The exclusion of their wool and cloth from the markets of the Netherlands seemed to her merchants at first a dreadful calamity. It led, however, as we have seen, to their seeking new markets for themselves, and thus, with an expanding commerce, they learned the lesson of self-confidence, the chief requisite of success in any calling. Accompanying this feeling was the intense national and Protestant spirit which was every day becoming more aroused under the running private war with Spain. In the fact that these momentous changes were brought about largely through the operations of the corsairs, who represented one marked phase of the new national energy, may be found my excuse for giving so much space to an account of these national heroes.

Still, the Protestantism which the nation was acquiring in this manner had little of a religious character. It did well enough for Elizabeth; it would have suited all her requirements that a subject should love her, hate the pope, and plunder the Spaniards. But there was another spirit abroad in the land—a spirit which was to make England, for a time, a Puritan country; a country of correct morals, and imbued with a love of justice and equal rights before the law. To be sure, this condition was not to continue long, but, considering what we have seen in the preceding pages, the wonder is that it ever came about at all. It is evident that the influence which could work such a revolution must have been a very potent one. In fact, it was complex in its nature, but, like the influences which produced the former waves of progress, mainly traceable to a foreign origin. Of its nature and the methods of its operation we shall see something in the next chapters.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLISH PURITANISM

THE JESUITS AND THE PURITANS—1558–1585

We have seen in the preceding pages something of the religious condition of England during the first part of the Elizabethan age. There is nothing surprising in the picture, when we bear in mind the prior history of the country, and the form which the Reformation took on among its people. Upon the Continent the Reformation was a religious movement; here it was largely secular and political. The result, at first, was a great breaking-down of religion and morality, while the concentration in one hand of the civil and religious power built up a tyranny which, in some of its features, seems at the present day well-nigh Asiatic in its disregard of human rights.* Before the century closed, however, the country saw a change, which was to become even more marked after Elizabeth had passed away. This change consisted in the elevation of the tone of morals among certain classes, and the appearance in the same quarter of a deep religious feeling, accompanied by a wide-spread demand for some measure of civil liberty. Such a revolution was caused little by anything within the nation, much less by anything within the Established Church.

* Hume likens it to the governments of Russia and Turkey in his time, and he was not as prejudiced as many persons think.

The religious system which the English Reformers constructed on the ruins of the papacy was a compromise, and, like all compromises, was disliked by the earnest men of either party. It retained a ritual, with most of the prayers and many of the forms and ceremonies of the old religion, while its doctrines were taken largely from the theology of Calvin. Such an establishment, presided over by a temporal monarch who assumed almost the authority of a pope, would have been impossible among a people who had much deep religious feeling. But the English, in the main, had none; and hence this hybrid, incongruous system might have worked well enough had the nation been left to itself, undisturbed by any foreign influence. Such an isolation was, however, now impossible. Upon the Continent the old and the new system of belief were fighting out a life-and-death struggle. Elizabeth tried to keep it from her doors; but every day an expanding commerce narrowed the channel which separated England from the field of conflict, and thicker and faster fell the sparks from the flames lighted by the warring factions. That some of them should take effect on British soil was, in the nature of things, inevitable.

The change which came about in England, lifting it to a higher plane, was due mainly to the conflict between two forces in the nation: one, a newly awakened Catholicism, the other the new-born Puritanism. Neither was native to the soil; each derived its power from a Continental influence.

How true this was as to the Catholics can be seen from a glance at their history during the first years of the reign of Elizabeth. As soon as she was fairly seated on the throne, she required all the priests and dignitaries of the old Church to conform to the Protestant

formularies, and a very small number of them refused compliance.* This outward conformity, however, was not sufficient. As time went on, more and more stringent laws were passed against even the private practice of the ancient rites. The Romanists were found mostly in the rural districts of the North and West, the least advanced sections of the kingdom, and there the old priests, disguised sometimes so as to resemble Protestant preachers, flitted about from house to house, or found concealment in the mansions of the wealthy squires and nobles. Persecution, of course, only increased the fervor of those who entertained sincere convictions, but these were few in number. Some passed over to the Continent and took up arms in France or Spain. Among those who remained at home, religious feeling seemed almost dying out.

In 1568, Mary Stuart fled to England, seeking a refuge from her insurgent subjects. She found a prison-house, in which her restless spirit was to chafe for nineteen years, until released by the headsman's axe. As a Catholic and the next heir to the throne, she became the centre, consciously or unconsciously, of endless plots against the government. The year after her arrival, some of the great Catholic earls of the North rose in open rebellion; but the people, on whose support they counted, refused assistance, and the leaders took the well-worn path to the Tower, and thence to the place of execution. The next year, the pope issued his bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, but even this fell harmless. In Scotland a religious war was waging; in Italy, Spain, France, and the Netherlands, the Catholics were all aflame with religious zeal, but in England they

* Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 120.

seemed sunk in a listless torpor. At last, however, a change came over them: the torpor was shaken off, a spiritual fervor took its place, and the listless, inoffensive papists seemed about to become a power in the land. To understand the influences which brought about this transformation, we must leave England and cast our eyes across the Channel.

In the Protestant view of the period covered by the Reformation, we are sometimes disposed, while considering the great intellectual awakening which brought the Protestants into being, to overlook its effects upon those who remained true to Mother Church. It should be remembered, however, that the teachings of Luther and Calvin would have produced slight results but for the general spread of knowledge by which they were preceded, and that the same cause effected a revival of spiritual zeal among the Romanists. The world was shaking off the intellectual sleep of ages. As men awoke, many of them turned to religion, and such men, through the influence of nature or environment, were divided into Protestants and Catholics. It would be a great mistake to suppose that all the reformers were on one side, or that honesty of purpose was confined to one religious party. All over Europe were scattered earnest Catholics, burning with enthusiasm and devoted to their Church, but fully conscious of the corruptions which were eating out its heart.

Shortly after Luther opened his crusade against the papacy, a society was formed which gave to these spirits a rallying-point within their Church, and an organization through which to work. It was the Order of the Jesuits: its founder was Ignatius Loyola. Loyola was a Spanish knight, brought up at the court of Ferdinand, and distinguished for his gallantry among a race of sol-

diers. In 1521, when thirty years of age, he was severely wounded at the siege of Pampeluna. A long illness followed, which left him lamed for life. During his tedious confinement he took up, to while away the time, a life of the Saviour, and a volume containing the lives of the saints. The latter inflamed an ardent imagination, fed before on tales of chivalry alone. What others had done, as was there recorded, he thought that he could do himself, and so determined to live a life of abstinence, penitence, and holiness. In a vision the Virgin appeared before him, with the holy infant in her arms, and blessed his resolution. Upon emerging from the sick-room, he sold his little property, gave the proceeds to the Church, and set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Returning in safety, having begged his way and suffered untold hardships, he entered upon a course of study. Practising the most rigorous austerities, and visited in dreams at times by angels and then by demons, he passed several years in various universities, finally drifting to Paris. There he found two men of great intellectual power who shared his mystic belief and became his life associates—Peter Faber, a Savoyard, and a Spaniard, Francisco Xavier. They formed a little band, sworn to chastity and poverty, and devoted to the conversion of sinners at home and the heathen abroad. Joining other companions with them, in 1537 they went to Rome, calling themselves the Company of Jesus. In 1540, they were formally organized, adding to their previous vows one of unquestioning obedience to their general, whom they elected for life.

Thus established, upon principles which attracted the fervent sympathy of a newly awakened Catholic world, this order placed itself at the absolute disposal of the pope. In the contest with the reformers outside the

Church, it became the chief support of the papacy, and to its efforts, more than to any other cause, was due the check which was placed upon the progress of the Reformation. How well the Jesuits, as they were soon called by others, met the wants and the spirit of the age in Catholic countries is shown by the rapidity with which they spread through Europe, and the vast power which they soon acquired. What earnest soul, believing in the doctrines of Catholicism, could fail to be moved by the self-abnegation and the heroism which these men displayed? At the outset they appealed simply to the principle of duty, the great word of power in every language. Loyola, the first general of the order, performed the most menial services in his church at Rome, taught classes of little children, and collected alms for the Jews and for abandoned women, in the work of whose reformation he labored with unflagging zeal until his death from pure exhaustion.

Their missionaries sought out the heathen in every land. The history of the world shows nothing comparable with their heroic labors in this direction. At the first organization of the society the work began. In 1541, Xavier went to the Portuguese East Indies. At the time of his death, ten years later, he and his associates could number the converts to their faith by the tens of thousands. They carried the crucifix through India, China, the isles of the Pacific, and even Africa, two centuries before the Protestants began their work, except by sending out a straggling preacher here and there. In the New World, their efforts were equally extensive. Everywhere they followed in the wake of the ferocious Spaniards, largely mitigating the horrors of their conquests. In Paraguay, they established almost a paradise on earth. Even among the savage

tribes of Canada their work of civilization was not unimportant.*

Very different from the life of many a modern missionary was that of these pioneers in the heathen field. Nothing since the early days of Christianity equals the hardships which they suffered, the perils which they faced. Men of high birth and delicate nurture plunged into the wilderness, and passed years without even the sight of any friendly faces, except those of the dusky savages about them, and with no future except the certainty of martyrdom. The posts of greatest danger, where they could have a choice, were the ones to which they flocked. Thus, when the news reached Europe that a member of their order had, in Japan, denied the faith—and this was almost the only instance in their history—volunteers sprang up from every quarter praying for permission to go there and vindicate the truth. The prayers of many were granted, and all of these volunteers laid down their lives amid horrible tortures; with them the recusant himself, who, repenting of his weakness, went before the magistrates and acknowledged that he also was a Christian.†

In Europe the Jesuits did a work much greater than that accomplished in foreign lands. To their efforts was largely due the purification of the Romish Church from the gross abuses which had aroused the indigna-

---

* See Parkman's "Jesuits in North America."

† By way of contrast, it may here be noted that two hundred years after the foundation of the Jesuit missions in Asia, the English East India Company refused, "for weighty and substantial reasons," to permit the Gospel to be preached in its provinces, even by Protestant missionaries. Mackenzie's "Nineteenth Century," book ii. chap. ix.

tion of mankind. They took no money for a mass; they refused to confess a woman unless in the presence of a brother priest; they practised and enforced upon their pupils strict chastity of life; and they never sacrificed the interests of their order to any consideration of selfish ease. Unlike the members of the old monastic organizations, they wore no peculiar garb, but dressed like the ordinary clergy, or, when deemed advisable, even adopted the costume of the country in which they lived. No time was spent by them in idle ceremonies, but they devoted themselves to an active life as preachers, teachers, and confessors. Recognizing the spirit of the age, instead of disparaging science they took a leading part in its development. They cultivated literature, and won high renown as scholars—oratory, and became the first preachers in the Church.

But their greatest pre-eminence was attained in the province of education. Knowing that as the twig is bent the tree will be inclined, they devoted their chief energies to the training of the young. All over Catholic Europe they established schools, in which the instruction was entirely free. Reversing the old traditions under which teachers and scholars were natural enemies, they won the love and confidence of their pupils, binding them by chains of affection which no time could weaken. Preparatory schools took up children in their infancy, and thence they were transferred to colleges which turned them out as finished scholars, in everything except the power of thinking for themselves in matters of religion. The system which they established was a vast machine for enrolling and disciplining an army of civilians, sworn to obey the orders of their leader, and that leader they looked up to as God's representative on earth.

While thus training the rising generation, they did not, however, neglect those who had already reached maturity. Here their chief influence was exerted through the confessional. Rigid in their own lives, they gained the respect and confidence of the sincere. These formed their early followers. But as time rolled on, after the death of Loyola, it was charged, and perhaps not unjustly, that for others they made religion comfortable. In a sense very different from that intended by the great apostle, they became all things to all men; not to save the men, but to build up the power of their order. To their own members, however, no relaxation of discipline was shown, and no body of soldiers, working together or as single scouts, ever showed more clearly what discipline and intensity of purpose can accomplish. When they were first organized Loyola had nine companions; in sixteen years the nine had grown to a thousand; by the end of the century they numbered over ten times as many. They then had obtained the chief direction of the education of youth in every Catholic country of Europe. They had become the confessors of almost all its monarchs, and of almost every person eminent for rank or power, thus holding in their keeping the secrets of governments and of individuals without number.*

Such was the all-powerful organization which sprang up to fight the battles of Catholicism against the Reformation. In after-years it became one of the curses of

---

* Robertson's "Charles V." Bacon, who knew of what he spoke, pays the Jesuits the high tribute of having "enterprised to reform the discipline and manners of the Church of Rome," and, with Luther and the divines of the Protestant Church, "awaked to their great honor and succour all human learning."—Bacon's "Filum Labyrinthi."

the world, and among Protestants the name Jesuit is often synonymous with the atrocious doctrine that the end justifies the means. There is no danger that the crimes or the pernicious influence exerted by some of the members of this order will ever be overlooked. Still, it is not consistent with historic truth, while painting their dark side to conceal their virtues, or to deny the great services which they have rendered to humanity. Too much of this has been done in the heat of controversy, while the opposite rule has been applied to the Protestant reformers, and especially to our own ancestors, English and American. This mode of dealing with the characters of the dead is sometimes, apparently, considered to be in the interest of patriotism or religion. It is very difficult, however, to reconcile it with morality, except by adopting the principle imputed to the Jesuits, which mankind unite in holding up to execration. One thing is very certain, no one can understand the religious history of the sixteenth century, in which the Company of Jesus came into existence, who fails to recognize the honesty and devotion to principle which actuated the great majority of its members.

When the order arose, the papacy was confronted by enemies from within as well as from without. Protestantism was sweeping over Europe and carrying everything before it. The Jesuits, by proclaiming the principle of reform within the Church, stayed its tide and confined it within its present narrow limits. But they did much more than this for the pope himself. Many of the Catholic rulers and a number of the bishops were disposed to dispute the authority of the head of the Church. Every one knows how readily the people of England accepted their king in place of the pope of Rome, and the feeling which led to this action was not

unknown in other lands. A number of the French and Spanish prelates asserted that an œcumenical council could control the holy see, and claimed that they held a commission from Heaven, independent of the pope. At the Council of Trent, which settled some of these questions, the representative of the Jesuits, speaking in the name of the whole fraternity, proclaimed that the government of the faithful had been committed by Christ to the pope alone; that in him all sacerdotal authority was concentrated; and that through him only priests and bishops derived their divine authority.* It was largely owing to the efforts of the Jesuits that a formal decree of this famous Council established the jurisdiction of the pope as an article of Catholic faith, leaving the question of his infallibility in matters of doctrine to be settled by future generations.

Thus the Catholic Church stood fully committed to the theory of the papal jurisdiction, and, abandoning the defensive, entered upon an aggressive policy. How it crushed out heresy in Italy and Spain, how it curbed the Reformation in Germany, and throttled it in France, are familiar stories. How the Jesuits carried their missionary work to Asia, Africa, and the New World, we have already noticed. We have also seen something of the death-struggle going on in the Netherlands. In the crusade which the Church was carrying on, to win back the recusants and to gain new converts, England came last. It had been purely Catholic until the days of Henry the Reformer; it had been again nominally Catholic for a brief period under Queen Mary; it was now nominally Protestant under Queen Elizabeth; in fact, it was in some respects almost a pure missionary field.

* Macaulay's "England," ii. 54, and authorities cited.

This the papal authorities recognized after a few years' experience, and they set about its cultivation with system and deliberation.

The great obstacle in England to a religious awakening of any kind lay in the general ignorance of the people, including the clergy. The priests of the old Church who remained at home had little education, and those of the new establishment were mostly in the same condition. The first thing, therefore, to be done by the Catholics, if they wished to gain the advantage of their adversaries, was to educate preachers who would expound anew to these islanders the doctrines which their fathers had accepted without question. This work was begun in 1568 by the establishment at Douay, now a city of France, of a college for the education of English Catholics. It was founded under the auspices of Philip II., and was conducted by a number of professors from Oxford, who had taught in that university during the reign of Mary, but who had fled to the Continent to avoid the persecution of Elizabeth. During the rule of Requesens in the Low Countries it was removed to Rheims, and in 1579 it was supplemented by another college, founded at Rome by Pope Gregory XIII. The pupils instructed at these institutions, which were wholly free both as to board and education, stood pledged to return to England and preach the doctrines of the old religion.

The enterprise flourished from the outset. Three years after its opening, the college at Douay contained one hundred and fifty pupils. Three years later, in 1574, these missionaries began crossing the Channel to revive the drooping faith of their compatriots. In four years more, the Spanish minister at London was able to write to Philip that there were a hundred of these

young priests disguised as laymen, doing missionary work in England. Their success was marked and immediate. The Catholic gentry, inspired by their fervor, began to pluck up courage; they refused to attend the Anglican service, as required by law, and some openly avowed their ancient faith. The government soon became alarmed. In 1578 Parliament was convened, and passed a law making the landing of these seminary priests, or the harboring of them, treason, and in November of the same year one of their number, Cuthbert Mayne, was tried and executed.

Still, these young men, although full of zeal and burning with enthusiasm, formed but a skirmish line; behind them stood a body of trained warriors, anxious to battle, and, if need be, die, for their religion. The latter belonged to the Company of Jesus, which had taken into its ranks the ablest and most promising of the English refugees. Chief among them were Edmund Campian and Robert Parsons, both of whom had been fellows of Oxford. Campian, who was born in 1540, was the more brilliant of the two. At the age of twenty he had delivered an oration at Amy Robsart's funeral, at twenty-six he had gained great favor in the eyes of Elizabeth by the skill with which he had disputed before her when she visited the university. The next year, although a Catholic at heart, he was ordained a deacon in the English Church, but this step was followed by deep spiritual anguish. He left Oxford, lived for a time in Ireland, writing an interesting sketch of the condition of that country, and finally passed over to the Continent and settled in the university at Rheims. There he was recognized as an eloquent preacher and learned theologian. Parsons, some five years younger, was less of a preacher, but cool, clear-headed, and sagacious as a leader.

When, in 1580, the pope decided to send a band of Jesuits to England to complete the work of re-establishing the Romish Church, Parsons and Campian were selected to head the mission. Proceeding to Rome, they received the papal blessing, and thence set out with seven companions, Oxford graduates and Jesuits like themselves, to encounter their expected martyrdom. Singly and in disguise they crossed the Channel, meeting with a welcome which must have raised their wildest hopes. Campian had been instructed to abstain entirely from politics, and devote himself solely to the work of conversion. He went at once to London, then the very stronghold of English Protestantism, and directly after his arrival preached to a vast audience in a hall hired for him in the middle of the city. Warned of his intended arrest, he then fled into the country, and his companions dispersed to carry their teachings into every county of the kingdom. To them the field seemed white for the harvest. Young men flocked to them with all the fervor of youth, the old came forward offering to lay down the remnant of their lives for the holy cause. The ignorance and looseness of living among the ministers of the Established Church excited their just indignation, while they were cheered and encouraged by hearing that the honesty of a Catholic had passed into a proverb.* Within a few months

* Campian's letter to the general of the Jesuits. Froude, xi. 346. The Church of Rome, thanks to the efforts of the Jesuits, had at this time been largely purged of the scandals which had brought about the Reformation. The tables were now turned, in England at least, and the Catholics could retort on the Protestants much of what had been denounced in them half a century before. Hallam, writing of this period, says: "After the Council of Trent had effected such considerable reforms in the Catholic discipline, it seemed a sort of

after their arrival, Father Allen, the head of the college at Rheims, triumphantly announced that there were twenty thousand more Catholics in England than a year before.

This exultation was, however, of short life. The Jesuits landed on the English shores in June, 1580. By December, Walsingham, Elizabeth's great secretary, whose spies were everywhere, had most of the original party under lock and key. Then followed the rack and the headsman's axe. Parsons escaped to the Continent, and Campian eluded arrest for six months more; but he, too, was taken the next July, and, in December, after bearing the extremity of torture, met the death of a martyr with the constancy which became a member of his order.

But this did not end the movement. The pope had shown sagacity in sending to England as missionaries only native-born Englishmen, and those mostly in the flush of manhood. Their fervor was infectious, for no one could doubt the sincerity of convictions which they were at all times ready to seal with their blood, and here, as elsewhere, extreme persecution only bred new converts. After the death of Campian, Jesuits and seminary priests flocked in by tens and twenties, so that in three years, as it was reported, there were five hundred in the kingdom.* Unquestionably a considerable number of the people loved the old Church, with its gorgeous ceremonial appealing directly to the senses, and its articles of faith hallowed by the traditions of

---

reproach to the Protestant Church of England that she retained all the dispensations, the exemptions, the pluralities, which had been deemed the peculiar corruptions of the worst times of popery." —"Const. Hist.," i. 194.

* Froude, xi. 648.

centuries; while the great majority were indifferent, and so open to conviction.* Men in dwelling upon the past are inclined to retain only their pleasurable recollections. When these young priests, themselves pure of life and devoted wholly to the Church, opened their crusade, the abuses of the former system were largely forgotten, while its beauties and benefactions were well remembered.

Taking all the conditions together, there is nothing strange about the early successes of the Jesuits in their effort to bring England back to the ancient faith, or in the fact that they fully believed in the ultimate

* The question of the proportion of Catholics to Protestants in England during the reign of Elizabeth is one as to which authorities differ widely, and which, from its nature, never can be determined. Froude thinks that the Catholics were in a very large majority; on the other hand, Hallam estimates the Protestants to have made up two thirds of the nation, while Lingard is of opinion that in the middle of the reign the two parties were about equally divided. Such estimates, founded merely on the opinions of modern writers as to the general predispositions of the people, are of very little significance. As Macaulay has well said, the important question is, how many of the nation had made up their minds on either side and were willing to run any risks for their opinions? The history of the times shows conclusively that these were very few. Cardinal Bentivoglio, who was papal nuncio at Brussels from 1607 to 1616, estimated the number of earnest Catholics in England during that period at about one thirtieth of the nation. The people who would without scruple become Catholic if the Catholic religion were established, he estimated at four fifths of the nation. With this estimate Macaulay concurs, and he expresses the opinion that at the accession of Elizabeth not one twentieth of the people had any earnest convictions in either direction. Essay on Nares's "Memoirs of Burleigh." The great problem of the time, therefore, was the determination of the question which party should develop and increase so as to control the State.

triumph of their cause. But there were obstacles in their path which proved insuperable.

In the first place, the religious question could not be separated from the political one. Campian and his associates might preach only the doctrines of a Church, which, freed from its abuses, appealed to some of the noblest elements in human nature. But back of them stood a power to which they had sworn unquestioning obedience—a power that claimed the right of deposing monarchs, and was now coming to be recognized as the foe of the national existence. Most of her troubles Elizabeth had brought upon herself, but they were no less real on that account. Already she had been excommunicated by the pope. Across the Channel, the Guises were plotting for the release of Mary Stuart, and Philip of Spain was being goaded into action by the aggressions of the British pirates. What was going on in Ireland and Scotland, where the pope was also at work, will be shown in a later chapter. When the peaceful missionaries had prepared the way, a foreign invasion would make short work of English nationality.

All this is apparent enough to the modern historian, as it was to the English statesmen of the time, who set out with ruthless ferocity to crush the Catholic revival. But the love of nationality, on which they relied, would have availed little against religious zeal had there not been another party in the State, made up of men as earnest, as devoted, and as zealous as the Catholics themselves. These were the Puritans. To Elizabeth they were much more obnoxious than the papists ever were, and yet but for them she never would have died peacefully upon the throne. It was largely through their labors that her ministers were enabled to stay the tide of the returning Catholicism which threatened to ingulf the land. It was

with their development that England was again brought into close relations with the civilization of the Old World, imbibing new ideas of civil liberty, and receiving an impulse which has carried her to the forefront among nations. Later on, they founded New England, giving an impress to the character of untold millions across the ocean. Thus affecting two continents, the Puritans of England have played a part in the world's history which makes the subject of their origin and growth one of unfailing interest.

From the death of Cromwell until within a comparatively recent time, it was the fashion among British writers to ridicule the English Puritans, just as it has been the fashion to ridicule the Hollanders. The Cavaliers, who went down before them in battle, and who saw the Commonwealth raise England to a leading place in European politics, hated, but had an intense respect for, Cromwell and his Ironsides. It was not until after the Restoration, when the Stuarts had bemired the fame and honor of England, that the great virtues of the Puritans seemed to be forgotten, and men thought only of their faults and of those external peculiarities which are so easily caricatured and satirized.* The prejudice against them after the Restoration was not universal, however, for, as in the case of the Hollanders, men were always found to do them honor. Notable among these

* The English Puritans antedated Shakespeare, and during his life played an important part in politics; yet the great dramatist, unlike some of his petty followers, never regarded them as objects of ridicule. We find in his pages almost every type of knave and buffoon, but no snivelling, canting, Puritanical hypocrite or rogue, such as more modern writers have depicted. In fact, although in common use, the word Puritan occurs but a very few times in Shakespeare's plays, and then scarcely in an offensive sense.

men was Hume, the apologist of the Stuarts and the champion of the Tory party.

Speaking of the arbitrary nature of Elizabeth's government, and of the fact that her most violent assaults on the freedom of the people attracted not the least attention from contemporaneous writers, Hume remarks: "So absolute, indeed, was the authority of the crown that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled and was preserved by the Puritans alone; and it was to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous and habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their Constitution." * Again, discussing the same question in another place, he says: "It was only during the next generation that the noble principles of liberty took root, and, spreading themselves under the shelter of Puritanical absurdities, became fashionable among the people." †

Such ideas were not fashionable in England when Hume's history was written. As he relates in his autobiography, he "was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation," from every side and from every party. The Tories were indignant that any credit should be given to the Puritans, and the Whigs were no less indignant at the suggestion that English liberty began with the growth of Puritanism; for they had always claimed that the Stuarts had attempted to deprive the people of long-settled, well-established rights. ‡

Hallam, in his "Constitutional History," questions

---

* "History of England," chap. xl. † Idem, Appendix, vol. iii.

‡ How the High-churchmen hated the Puritans is shown in almost every page of Strype's "Annals," written in the early part of the eighteenth century.

some of the conclusions of Hume, and takes that author severely to task for comparing the government of England during the reign of Elizabeth with the governments of Russia and Turkey. But Hallam himself is one of the best witnesses to the almost despotic character of Elizabeth's rule. Even more fully than Hume himself, he shows how the laws were constantly set aside by royal proclamations; how the courts of justice were mere instruments of tyranny; how trade was shackled by monopolies in every quarter; how imports and exports were taxed by the crown alone; how Parliament was prevented from discussing questions of Church or State, and how its members who attempted to raise forbidden questions were silenced by imprisonment. But, he says, liberty was not dead, because the House of Commons exercised some rights: it insisted on being the judge of the election of its own members; its members were exempt from arrest on civil process; and it claimed the right of punishment for contempt. These privileges, all novel, were to become important in the future, but they were of little value at the time. Elizabeth packed the House by the creation of sixty-two new boroughs, and was willing to let its members play at Parliament, so long as they did nothing to interfere with her prerogative. But Hallam says further that Parliament was not wholly subservient, for, from time to time, voices were raised there against the tyranny of the crown, and that these voices became more numerous as the years rolled on. This is true. They were the voices of the men who, according to Hume, kindled the precious spark of liberty in despotic times.

After all, so far as relates to the influence of the Puritans, these authors differ but slightly. Hume says that they kindled and preserved the spark; Hallam says that

they became "the depositaries of the sacred fire" and "revived the smouldering embers."*

But whatever may have been the relation of the Puritans to the sacred fire of liberty, certain it is that, within the period of a few years, they worked a revolution in English thought and action which is one of the remarkable phenomena of modern times, and, standing by itself, incapable of comprehension.† New ideas were in-

---

* "Const. Hist.," i. 231.

† Macaulay, the champion of the Whigs, writing nearly a century after Hume, says, in regard to the arbitrary rule of Elizabeth: "It has often been alleged, as an excuse for the misgovernment of her successors, that they only followed her example; that precedents might be found in the transactions of her reign for persecuting the Puritans, for levying money without the sanction of the House of Commons, for confining men without bringing them to trial, for interfering with the liberty of parliamentary debate. All this may be true. But it is no good plea for her successors, and for this plain reason, that they were her successors. She governed one generation, they governed another; and between the two generations there was almost as little in common as between the people of two different countries." Upon the causes of this transformation, however, Macaulay, like other English writers, throws but little light. Essay on Nares's "Memoirs of Burleigh." In this essay, Macaulay also calls in question some of the conclusions of Hume regarding the despotic character of Elizabeth's government. He does not dispute the facts, but argues that her rule could not have been despotic, for had it been so her subjects would have risen against her in successful revolution. This argument, however, proves too much; for, tried by such a test, no monarch could be called a despot, except one who had been deposed by his subjects. As for the affection entertained for Elizabeth by the English, it is sufficient to remark that no monarch, in life and after death, was ever more loved by his people than was Philip II. by the Spaniards. This does not prove that Philip respected any principles of constitutional liberty, but that his Spanish subjects cared nothing for such principles. He was loved by his people because he upheld the papacy, and tried to extend the power of

troduced, and new principles were developed by them, which for a time controlled the nation and left their imprint on the national character, although at no time were they accepted by the body of the people. It was the very novelty of their principles that made the Puritans, when they came into power, so obnoxious to the majority of Englishmen, and that for many after-generations made their name a by-word and reproach. At the restoration of the Stuarts, England seemed to have done with them forever. But, although the prejudice against the name continued, many of their reforms survived, and a few years of the old tyranny were sufficient to breed a new revolution and effect the reinstatement of still more of the Puritan principles in civil matters. These principles have never been adopted in England as fully as in the United States, where they underlie all the institutions; but as the English form of government has become more democratic, the tide has turned, and to-day the name of Puritan is a title of honor.

Yet, with this change of sentiment, there has been little change in the mode of writing English history in one important point. Whether the Puritan is looked upon as kindling the flame, or as reviving the smouldering embers of liberty, England is still represented as the fountain from which have poured forth all the fertilizing streams which have enriched the modern world. One class of writers gives the Puritan the credit of originality; the other endows him with a knowledge of early English in-

---

Spain; in the same way, Elizabeth was loved by her people because she was believed to oppose the papacy, and did extend the power of England. In this connection it may be noticed that Good Queen Bess was no more the idol of her people than was her father, Bluff King Hal, under whom, certainly, there was little liberty.

stitutions, only unfolded to us by the patient research of modern investigators. Each ignores all the foreign influences which at this crucial period shaped the future of the English people. But, in fact, the ideas and principles of the Puritans in civil as well as religious matters were not indigenous to English soil. They were in the main not only novel in England, but also of foreign growth, and, being transplanted, they took root but slowly, and after a brief efflorescence lived, for a time, but a sickly life. Where they came from and how they were brought to England are interesting questions, involving an examination of the development of English Puritanism on lines quite different from those usually followed.

The accession of Elizabeth to the throne of England, on November 17th, 1558, was hailed with joy by all classes in the nation, except the few fanatical bigots who had sympathized with the bloody persecutions of her sister Mary. The Protestants saw in the young queen a daughter of the marriage which had brought about a separation from the Church of Rome, and upon that fact, and upon her Protestant education, based their hopes of the future. The Catholics knew that she had professed their creed during the reign just ended, and felt assured that she had none of the bigotry which would endanger their personal safety, even if she went back to her earlier faith. All had heard of her as a young princess of studious habits, who had borne imprisonment with exemplary patience, looking every inch a queen, and yet with manners modest and affable.*

---

* Signor Soranzo, the Venetian ambassador, writing home in 1554, four years earlier, when Elizabeth was twenty-one, says: "Such an air of dignified majesty pervades all her actions that no one can fail to judge her a queen. She is a good Greek and Latin scholar, and,

The first act of the queen was the selection of Sir William Cecil, the famous Lord Burghley, as her chief secretary and confidential adviser. Cecil had been the secretary of her brother Edward, but after his death had conformed to the Catholic religion, as Elizabeth had done; although Mary had looked upon his conversion with distrust, and refused to give him any public office. He had always been friendly to Elizabeth, and she never showed greater wisdom than in choosing him for her leading councillor. What was to be the religion of the State no one knew at first, and the conduct of the queen left the question doubtful. She attended mass, she buried her sister with all the solemnities of the Catholic ritual, and ordered prayers to be said for the soul of Charles V., who had just died. On the other hand, she released all the prisoners confined for their religion by her sister, allowed the Protestant exiles to return from the Continent, and when the Bishop of Carlisle was about to say mass in the royal chapel, she gave orders that the Host should not be elevated in her presence.* At about the same time a proclamation was issued forbidding all preaching in the kingdom. Evidently some intelligence was awaited before a final decision could be reached. It came, and it determined the religious history of England.

Immediately upon the death of Mary, messengers had been despatched to the different courts of Europe to an-

---

besides her native tongue, she speaks Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian *benissimo;* and her manners are very modest and affable." Rawdon Brown's "Calendar State Papers," 1554, from "Venetian Archives;" quoted in a charming little book, "English Lands, Letters, and Kings, from Celt to Tudor," by Donald G. Mitchell (New York), p. 209. Scores of witnesses testify as to what her manners became when she had been a few years upon the throne.

* Lingard's "History of England" (Philadelphia, 1827), vii. 205.

nounce the succession of Elizabeth. It was known that the French king would not recognize her title, for the Dauphin had married Mary Stuart, who claimed the English crown. But Philip of Spain was the natural enemy of France; he had always professed a friendship for his sister-in-law, and now that he was a widower he offered her his hand. Such a marriage, however, required a dispensation from the pope. Unfortunately for the Catholic cause, the papal throne was occupied by a pontiff (Paul IV.), who was over eighty years old, narrow-minded, and under the influence of France. When, therefore, the English ambassador announced the accession of Elizabeth, the pope replied that he was unable to comprehend the hereditary right of one who was not born in lawful wedlock; that the Queen of Scots claimed the crown as the nearest legitimate descendant of Henry VII.; but that if Elizabeth was willing to submit the controversy to his arbitration, she should receive from him every indulgence which justice could allow.*

With such a rebuff from Rome, which cut off all hopes of a Spanish marriage, and with an adverse claimant to the crown, who was a Catholic and supported by the power of France, nothing remained to Elizabeth, whatever her inclinations, except to announce herself as a Protestant queen. Still, secrecy was maintained until arrangements could be completed for assembling a new Parliament. A commission was privately set at work

---

* Lingard, vii. 204; Creighton's "Age of Elizabeth" (New York, 1885), p. 46. Paul died in the succeeding August, 1559. His successor, Pius IV., was a man of very different ideas. He sent a nuncio to England, offering, it is said, to approve of the Book of Common Prayer, provided only that the English Church would submit to the papal supremacy. But the offer came too late. The nuncio was not even allowed to enter England. Creighton, p. 50.

to revise the Prayer-book of Edward VI. Some of the old bishops were imprisoned, and four or five new Protestant peers created so as to control the upper House. The lower House was filled in the usual manner. During the reign of Mary, the sheriffs had been instructed to see that only good Catholics were returned as members. Now they were instructed to have a choice made from a list of candidates furnished by the court.* On January 15th, 1559, Elizabeth was formally crowned, one of the old bishops consenting to officiate, using the rites of the Catholic Church. On January 25th the new Parliament began its session. Of the bishops, only ten were in attendance and voting; of the sixty-one peers, thirty were conspicuous by their absence.† The lower House was made up of court nominees, distinguished for their zeal in the cause of Protestantism.

The Parliament, thus constituted, in a session of three months, reconstructed the English Church, which, with little change, has continued on the basis then established until the present day. The packed members of the lower House knew nothing of the vacillation of the queen. They were decided in their opposition to the Church of Rome, and had no question of her entire sympathy. As Englishmen, they had the traditional reverence for the crown which would lead them to pass almost any measure which came to them with the royal recommendation. Proceeding in a few days to give to the crown the first-fruits (that is, the first year's income of all church livings) and tenths (that is, one tenth of all incomes thereafter), they began by enacting two statutes, which are of great importance as affecting all the subsequent history of the Puritans.

* Strype's "Annals," i. 33; Lingard, vii. 206, citing "Clarendon Papers." † Froude, vii. 41.

The first of these statutes is commonly called "The Act of Supremacy." By its provisions the sovereign was declared to be the supreme governor of the Church. She was authorized to nominate all bishops, to control the ecclesiastical state and persons by juridical visitation, to correct all manner of heresies, schisms, offences, contempts, and enormities in the Church; and these powers of visitation and correction she was authorized to delegate to commissioners of her own selection. All persons in the State holding benefices or offices were required to take the oath of supremacy, avowing "the queen to be the only supreme governor within the realm, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical causes and things as temporal." Any one affirming the authority, within the realm, of any foreign power, spiritual or ecclesiastical, was, for the first offence, to forfeit all his goods; for the second, to incur the penalties of a præmunire; and for the third, to be punished as a traitor.*

The second act revived the Book of Common Prayer of the time of Edward VI., with some alterations and additions. It provided that any minister who should refuse to use it, who should use any other rites and forms than those therein set down, or who should speak in its derogation, should, for the first offence, forfeit the profits of his benefice for a year, and be imprisoned for six months without bail; for the second, lose his benefice and be imprisoned for a year; and for the third, be imprisoned for life. Any persons not in order who should thus offend, or use public prayers in any other than the prescribed form, were for the first and second offence to be severely fined, and for the third to forfeit all their property and suffer imprisonment for life. Per-

* 1 Eliz. cap. 1.

sons absenting themselves from church on Sundays or holydays, without excuse, were to forfeit twelve pence for each offence. The ceremonies of the Church and the dress of the clergy were to be as in the time of Edward; but the queen, with the advice of her commissioners or of the archbishop, and without the concurrence of Parliament or even the body of the clergy, was authorized to ordain further rites and ceremonies without limit.*

Such were the famous ecclesiastical acts by which, in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, the Established Church was reorganized. They were aimed at the Catholics, and passed the upper House only by small majorities and after bitter opposition. Under their provisions, all the bishops except one lost their places; but of the clergy at large, numbering several thousands, less than two hundred refused to take the oath, and forfeited their livings.† Of the Puritans, whose name had not yet come into existence, little thought was taken. No one dreamed of what a scourge Parliament was placing in the hands of a queen who seemed so modest and affable in her demeanor. How she used it against those who were, at first, most exultant, we shall shortly see.

During the persecutions under Queen Mary, the most eminent of the Protestants, lay and clerical, had taken refuge in various cities of Germany and Switzerland.‡ In each country they found Protestantism in the ascendant, but under very different forms. The Lutherans of Germany had abjured the pope, but had practically

* 1 Eliz. cap. 2.

† Hallam, Froude, Camden, etc. Lingard says that the Catholic writers make the number much greater, but he does not give any figures.

‡ According to Neal, they were about eight hundred in number.

transferred his authority to the temporal princes. The secular rulers gained by the change, for their subjects no longer recognized a divided allegiance. The temporal and spiritual power of the pope was gone, but it was succeeded by the divine right of kings.* Calvinism, on the other hand, was republican in its character. The minister selected by the people was above king or noble. He might be a despot himself, but he had been chosen by the congregation, and acknowledged no superior except the King of Kings. The hereditary monarchs of the world were not mistaken in regarding the Calvinists as their natural foes.

In their forms of worship the difference between these two great sects was equally marked. Luther had retained much of the ceremonial of the Romish Church. Crucifixes and images, tapers and priestly vestments, even for a time the elevation of the Host and the Latin mass-book, continued in the Lutheran churches.† On the other hand, the followers of Calvin had adopted the simplest form of worship. They attempted to put away everything which, in their eyes, seemed to stand between man and his Creator. Their ministers appealed not to the senses, but to the reason, and hence the sermon formed the chief feature of their service. The more liberal among them regarded the question of stated forms of prayers, and peculiar vestments for the clergy, as matters of indifference; but, in the main, they were by a natural reaction opposed to everything which savored of the papacy. In England, during the reign of Ed-

---

* The Lutheran churches were governed by consistories appointed by the princes or other civil powers. "American Presbyterianism," Briggs, p. 2.

† Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 176.

ward VI., the tendency of the Reformation, under an influence from Geneva, had been towards Calvinism. The preachers who fled to the Continent, under his successor, had, therefore, a predisposition in that direction. The reception accorded them in their various asylums made it more decided. In Germany, among the Lutherans, they were neglected and frequently insulted, while by the Calvinists of Switzerland they were received with open arms.*

Upon the accession of Elizabeth the exiles returned to England with high hopes for the future. They represented the learning and the eloquence of the Church. They had suffered for their religion, and naturally expected recognition; but, what was of higher moment, they looked to see the Reformation take great strides under the young queen, who had always been regarded as a Protestant at heart. The personal recognition came at once to many of them, for, though the exiles were Calvinists almost to a man, they generally received preferment, since there were at the time no others to fill the higher places in the Church. The people, too, so far as they cared about such questions, seemed to be in accord with their opinions. So intense an antagonism had been aroused by the persecutions carried on in the reign of Mary that most of the earnest men of the kingdom inclined strongly in the opposite direction. In truth, but for one obstacle it is probable that the Reformation in England would have assumed a form that might have postponed for many years the appearance of the Puritans as a distinct party in the Church of State. That obstacle was the queen herself.

* Hallam, i. 176.

CHAPTER IX

ENGLISH PURITANISM

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE PURITANS—1558–1585

There are few historical personages who have received so much attention from writers, friendly and unfriendly, as Queen Elizabeth, and fewer still whose actions and character, until a recent day, have been so little understood. About this there is nothing remarkable, in view of her position as an unmarried queen, her place in the royal succession, the inaccessibility of many documents relating to the transactions of her reign, and the romantic conceptions generally prevailing as to the condition of English society when she was on the throne. These causes have led to numerous fictions regarding her conduct in civil matters, but such fictions can hardly be compared with those which have been woven about her conduct in religious matters. Some writers have gone so far as to style her "The Defender of European Protestantism." Whether she deserves this or any other title of honor connected with the Reformation will appear from her actions towards her own Church, and that of the struggling Protestants upon the Continent.

Elizabeth was what may be called a political Protestant, of the type common among the Lutheran princes of Germany. She was resolute not to admit the papal supremacy—so long, at least, as it meant peril to her throne—but not so averse to the doctrines abjured by

the Protestants. For example, she believed in transubstantiation, reproving a divine who preached against the real presence, and is said to have read prayers to the Virgin.* She wished to retain images and crucifixes in the churches, and, although this point was abandoned, she retained the crucifix and lighted tapers in her own chapel. The marriage of the clergy she always opposed. It was forbidden by a law enacted in the previous reign, to the repeal of which her consent could never be obtained. Hence, until after her death, nothing but an illicit connection existed, in the eyes of the law, between the ministers of the Established Church and their so-called wives.† As to the ceremonial of the Church, she was inflexibly opposed to the simplicity advocated by a majority of the earnest reformers. In her own chapel, and in some of the cathedrals, the service was so splendid that foreigners could only distinguish it from that of the Church of Rome by the use of the English language instead of Latin.‡

It was upon the point of ceremonials that the first controversy arose within the Church. The queen insisted that all the clergy should retain the vestments worn by the former priests. They were also to use the sign of the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, and to administer the communion to the congregation when kneeling.§ A large body of the new clergy objected to these forms, as relics of superstition, external symbols which tended to keep alive recollections of the old faith, preparing the way for its future restoration. To these

---

* Strype's "Annals," ed. 1824, i. 3.

† Hallam, i. 178. ‡ Neal.

§ The use of the ring in marriage was a pure pagan rite borrowed from ancient Rome.

men the question seemed one of vital importance. They found nothing in the Scriptures to warrant the enforcement of these ceremonies, and deemed their imposition by the civil power a violation of the right of conscience. Many others regarded them as matters of indifference, and, in order to have harmony within the Church, would have consented to give them up. Most of the leading divines took this view of the question, and, despite all the influence of the crown, a resolution favoring the abolition of the objectionable usages was lost in the convocation of the clergy, in 1562, by only a single vote.*

But although the queen insisted on the old ceremonial, many of the Established clergy refused compliance. Some wore the habits, others laid them aside; some wore a square cap, some a round cap, some a hat; some used the sign of the cross in baptism, others did not; while communicants received the sacrament kneeling, sitting, or standing, as the minister saw fit. This went on for several years while the nation was settling down into its new conditions.

During this period the word Puritan was coined.† It was not at first a term of reproach, as it came to be in later years, but was applied to men high in station who sought the purest form of worship, what they themselves called the "religio purissima." ‡ They still remained within the Church; they sought no separation. They only asked that in matters which their opponents

* Hallam, i. 180. Strype's "Annals," i. 505. Jewel, one of the most eminent of the bishops at this time (1562), in his private correspondence, speaks of the Church ceremonies as "scenic apparatus," "fooleries," and "relics of the Amorites." Works, viii. 122, 134.

† About 1564. Fuller's "Church History," ix. 66.

‡ See letter from De Silva, the Spanish ambassador, to Philip, July 2, 1568, quoted Froude, ix. 326.

regarded as non-essential their consciences might remain free. Nothing but persecution, largely instigated by a Spanish influence, alienated them from the Church, drove some into separate establishments, and finally made them a political party in the State. Well had it been for England if these extremities had been avoided.*

The persecution was begun by Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Parker himself had been a Puritan for two years after Elizabeth ascended the throne,† but he now professed new opinions, and exhibited that bitterness against his old associates which so often accompanies a change of parties. In 1565, he summoned before the Ecclesiastical Commission — a court established by the queen under the Act of Supremacy of 1559, and over which he presided — two of the eminent scholars of the time. The first, Samson, a Marian exile, who had refused a bishopric because of the obnoxious ceremonials, was dean of Christ Church; the other, Humphrey, was president of Magdalen College, Oxford.‡ Both were pronounced non-conformists, but one example was deemed sufficient. Samson, still refusing to wear the ordained vestments, was sent to prison for a time and deprived of his deanery.§ This example, however, produced no effect, and Parker decided on a broader measure. All the clergymen of London were summoned before him and called upon for a promise to comply with the legal ceremonial. Thirty-seven out of ninety-eight refused to give the promise, and were

---

* Hallam. † Hallam, i. 177.

‡ In 1563, Oxford contained only three Protestant preachers, and they were all Puritans. Neal.

§ Humphrey subsequently conformed. Strype's "Annals," ii. 451.

in consequence suspended from the ministry and deprived of their livings. These, unfortunately, according to Hallam, as was the case in all this reign, were the most conspicuous both for their general character and their talent in preaching.*

Among the clergymen who about this time were cited before Parker was a man that deserves more than a passing notice, for he probably did more for the cause of Protestantism in England than any other single person. This was John Foxe, the martyrologist.

A grave, learned, and laborious divine, he had gone into exile during the Marian persecution, and had passed his time abroad in writing a history of the martyrs of the Church, especially those who had suffered for religion during the reigns of Henry VIII. and his daughter Mary. His work was first published abroad in Latin, in the year 1559, for the benefit of foreigners. In 1563, he published an English translation with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth. Its value was at once appreciated, and an order was issued directing copies of the book to be placed in the churches for public perusal, in the same way that the English Bible had been placed there in the early days of the Reformation. When we recollect that until the appearance of the "Pilgrim's Progress," in the next century, the common people had almost no reading matter except the Bible and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," we can understand the deep impression that this book produced, and how much it served to mould the national character. Those who could read found there full details of all the atrocities committed on the Protestant Reformers: the illiterate could see the rude illustrations of the various instruments of torture, the rack, the gridiron,

* Hallam, i. 185.

the boiling oil, and then the holy martyrs breathing out their souls amid the flames.*

Take now a people just awakening to a new intellectual and religious life; let several generations of them, from childhood to old age, pore over such a book as this, and its stories become traditions, as indelible and almost as potent as songs and customs on a nation's life. All the fiendish acts there narrated were the work of the Church of Rome, for no hint was given of any other side of the story. No wonder that among the masses, aside from any religious sentiment or conviction, there grew up a horror and detestation of the pope and the Romish Church which have not entirely lost their force even after three centuries of Protestant domination. The influence of this feeling on the English people can hardly be exaggerated. The country squires who came to the parliaments of Elizabeth, as a rule, probably cared little for religion; but they were united in their hatred of the papal power, and this hatred, always coupled with a dread, became more intense as time went on. After the dispersion of the Spanish Armada, much of the fear of a direct attack from abroad passed away, and there arose that exultant spirit of national independence which Shakespeare puts into the words of an English king:

> "Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name
> So slight, unworthy, and ridiculous,
> To charge me to an answer, as the pope.
> Tell him this tale, and from the mouth of England
> Add thus much more: that no Italian priest
> Shall tithe or toll in our dominions."
>
> *King John*, act iii. sc. 1.

---

* In 1582, an enlarged edition appeared. In 1610, it was illustrated with copper cuts. Strype's "Annals," iii. 501.

Yet the hatred and the underlying dread of the Catholics still remained. Throughout the next century the English squire might know nothing of politics or theology; but, whether he sided with or against the king, it was a part of his creed to hate the pope, and nothing but this antagonism led to the ultimate downfall of the Stuarts. Other causes combined to produce this result, but certainly not the least important was Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," which could be found in every Protestant mansion-house, occupying, next to the Bible, the place of honor.

Such was the book, but its author was a Puritan. Elizabeth professed an esteem for him, but did as little in his behalf as she did for Ascham, her Puritan tutor, to whom her reputation for learning owes so much.* Having conscientious scruples about wearing the vestments prescribed by law, Foxe vainly sought a position in the Church, until at length, reduced to very great poverty, he obtained a petty place in the Salisbury Cathedral. Cited before the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1565, and asked to subscribe to the Prayer-book, he took a Greek Testament from his pocket and said he would subscribe to that. When they offered him the canons he refused, saying, "I have nothing in the Church but a prebend, and much good it may do you if you take it from me." It was not thought safe to deal harshly with a man to whom the whole Protestant world looked up, and he was permitted to go in peace, holding on to his little office until his death.†

---

* Ascham lived on a small pension granted by Henry VIII. and renewed by Mary, and a lease of a farm granted by the latter. Elizabeth gave him nothing, and, but for this lease, his wife and children would have been left beggars at his death. Ascham's "Scholemaster," Mayor's ed., 1863, pp. 202, 203.

† Neal.

Another of the lights of the Reformation fared more harshly. This was Miles Coverdale, whose translation of the Bible into English, printed at Antwerp in 1535, was the first that was published in the English language. He was a learned man, a graduate of Cambridge, and a celebrated preacher. During the reign of Edward he was made Bishop of Exeter. Upon the accession of Mary, he was imprisoned, and narrowly escaped the flames, being saved only by the intercession of the King of Denmark, in whose country he took refuge. Returning to England, he assisted at the consecration of Elizabeth's first Archbishop of Canterbury, but, being a Puritan and scrupling at the vestments, could for some time obtain no preferment. At last, in 1563, being now old and poor, the Bishop of London, who himself inclined towards Puritanism, took compassion on him and gave him a small church near London Bridge. Here he preached quietly for two years, but, not coming up to the required conformity, was obliged to relinquish his parish in the eighty-first year of his age. Thus, as Neal says, his gray hairs were brought down with sorrow to the grave.*

The persecution of the Puritans up to this point, although opposed to the principles of a wise and liberal-minded policy, might be extenuated upon the legal ground that ministers within an established church should conform to its requirements. The next measures, however, were of a different character, and for them there is no such palliation.

When the Puritan clergymen of London were driven from their churches, in 1565, many of their followers went with them and established separate associations.

* Neal, i. 108.

They created no disorder, but quietly came together in private houses or public halls, sang their hymns, and listened to the Bible and the sermons of their ministers. Certainly here was no grave offence against the law in a Protestant community. It would seem, so long as these gatherings were orderly, and nothing was said or intended against the government, that well-meaning, conscientious citizens might claim a simple toleration of their particular form of worship. Not so thought the queen or her archbishop. In 1567, a congregation thus worshipping in a London hall was arrested by the sheriff, and its members, to the number of about one hundred, hauled up before the bishop. The only charge against them was that of worshipping God under forms not prescribed by law; of this they were found guilty, and twenty-four men and seven women were sent to Bridewell for a year.*

It is an interesting fact, and it illustrates what Hume says, in contrast with some modern writers, as to the almost absolute power of the crown, that in these early coercive proceedings the queen and her archbishop had almost no sympathizers among the men prominent in Church and State. The Bishops of Norwich and Durham were openly on the side of the Puritans; the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of York inclined towards them; while in the council the Earls of Leicester, Bedford, Huntingdon, and Norwich (the chief Protestant nobles), Bacon, the Lord Keeper, Walsingham, Sadler, and Knollys, were either their friends or thought that severity was being pressed too far.† Trouble evidently was brewing for England as well as for the cause of the

* Neal. Hallam says that only fourteen or fifteen were sent to prison.

† Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 186.

Reformation at large. About this time, as we have already seen, Alva began his butchery in the Netherlands; Mary of Scotland became a prisoner, and the focus of conspiracy; Elizabeth was excommunicated by the pope; the Catholic college was founded at Douay; and the Northern earls rose in rebellion. The sagacious councillors of the queen thought this an ill-chosen crisis for driving to extremities the most faithful and devoted of her subjects. They urged that her true policy lay in an open, active support of the struggling Protestants abroad, and in a reformation of the Church at home, so as to make it a real and not a fictitious Protestant establishment.

The fact that Elizabeth never would accept their advice, even after Cecil joined them; that she carried out a vacillating foreign policy, while at home she opposed all innovations, trying to keep the Church as near as possible to the old model, the people ignorant, and the clergy subservient, forms an historical problem which has excited much discussion. The subject is an important one, for much that was unlovely in the later Puritanism of England was due simply to the actions of the queen. Many writers, looking only at the final result, give her credit for a sagacity far surpassing that of all the able statesmen by whom she was surrounded. They argue that had she gone too fast or too far, she would have alienated the great mass of her Catholic subjects and brought peril to her throne; that she kept her finger on the nation's pulse, and understood its beatings better than such men as Walsingham or Cecil; that what the country needed was peace; that her policy secured it, and that this proves her wisdom.* But this is

* Of this school, Green is a prominent leader.

arguing after the event. Such reasoning ignores the facts that time and again she was saved from ruin in her own despite; that nothing but a succession of what some of her advisers called miracles, and others called happy accidents, kept her on the throne; and that all her dangers came from the men whom she favored, while her safety lay in those whom she persecuted and discouraged. The problem of determining what motives actuated her conduct seems capable of a simpler solution than that of endowing her with superhuman prescience.

Elizabeth, as is well known, was without any religious convictions; but such sentiment or underlying superstitious instincts as she had inclined her to the Church of Rome. Her love of its gorgeous ceremonial shows the sentiment; her belief in the real presence, her adoration of the crucifix, and prayers to the Virgin when in peril show the innate superstition. These facts alone would not be sufficient to explain her policy, but they throw some light upon it. Add now another factor, and the question becomes much clearer.

Throughout the early years of her reign, the Huguenots in France and the Reformers in the Netherlands were struggling for their existence. They alone, the Protestants of Germany being listless, stood as a bulwark against the returning wave of Continental Catholicism. Incapable herself of comprehending their high religious motives, disliking them as rebels, and having no sympathy with their belief, Elizabeth always underrated their power and looked forward to their ultimate defeat. Entertaining this conviction, herself inclined to Catholicism, most of her personal favorites being adherents of the old faith,* and the great majority of the na-

* Froude, xi. 18.

tion having no convictions, what would be more natural than that she should always have had in view her own future reconciliation with the Church of Rome? The final collapse of the Spanish attempts on England in 1588, followed by an exultant outburst of national feeling which showed the weakness of Catholicism, together with the almost synchronous success of the Protestants in Holland and of Henry of Navarre in France, changed the current of European history; but if we seek for the motives which, in the main, controlled Elizabeth until that time, looking for an explanation of her foreign policy, and her treatment of the Catholics and Puritans at home, we have here what seems a very simple clue. Upon many subjects she showed more than a feminine vacillation, and her attachment to devious courses was something phenomenal; but to one object she was constant: nothing should be done, while she could prevent it, to place England beyond the pale, so that if it were to her personal advantage the restoration of the old religion would be impossible.

This theory of Elizabeth's religious policy has much direct evidence in its support, apart from that of her public actions which it alone explains. The latter, of course, were matters of common knowledge; but many facts relating to her private opinions and negotiations were unknown even to her council, and of many others the writers of her time were ignorant. Hence they, and the historians who have followed in their track, often thought her vacillating when she was really constant to one purpose. Froude first spread before the public many of the letters written by the Spanish ambassadors at London to Philip of Spain, which give to his history of this period so great a value. These Spaniards were, at times, her confidants, and their accounts of her private

declarations show the general consistency of her conduct. Philip himself, with all his means of information, always believed that she would be reconciled with Rome. Even after the pope's bull, he refused to recognize her excommunication.*

The first Parliament which met after her accession enacted laws very hostile to the Catholics; but she was then in a peculiar position, the pope having refused to recognize her title to the throne. The next year she told the Spanish ambassador that she was as good a Catholic as he was, and that she had been compelled to act as she had done.† Froude, on the authority of Cecil and Killigrew, thinks that she was then wavering.‡ In 1561, when she was desirous of marrying Dudley, made Earl of Leicester in 1564, the Spanish ambassador was informed by Sir Henry Sidney that if the marriage could be brought about through the influence of Philip, the Catholic religion should be restored. Undoubtedly, Sidney spoke with the authority of the queen. The scheme fell through because the Catholic nobles would not consent to a marriage with a man whom they regarded as an upstart.‖ In 1564, Elizabeth repeated to the Spanish ambassador, De Silva, what she had said about religion to his predecessor.§ In 1566, the pope offered to recognize the legitimacy of Elizabeth, by reversing the former decree relating to the divorce of her father, if she would re-establish the Romish Church. Thus one great obstacle would have been removed. At this time Parliament

---

* Froude, vii. 13, xi. 26. † Idem, vii. 251. ‡ Idem, p. 253.

‖ Froude, vii. 316. It was the continued opposition of the Catholic nobles to his union with the queen that ultimately led Dudley to become a prominent friend of the Puritans. Froude, ix. 181.

§ Idem, viii. 105.

was anxious to make further reforms in the Church. Under the advice of De Silva, Elizabeth interfered, and all action was prevented.* In 1573, and again in 1578, she told the Spanish ambassador that she held the Catholic creed herself, and that her differences with her Catholic subjects were merely political.† In 1576, she threatened to make war on the Prince of Orange, and this meant ultimate reconciliation with Rome.‡ These illustrations might be largely multiplied. It may be said that they are only evidence of her duplicity; but they show what she had in mind, and illuminate her public acts, which, read in their light, make all her religious policy consistent.

Although during the early years of Elizabeth's reign, before the appearance of the Jesuits, a persecution of the Catholics was carried on, this persecution, it must be remembered, was mild in its character, and due to peculiar circumstances. The Parliaments were largely Puritan in inclination, and passed laws to which, at first, perhaps she did not venture to refuse assent—and possibly they were her own suggestions—as, the pope having denied her title to the crown, she would have been left without any party in the State unless she had allied herself with the Reformers. Later on, when more firmly seated on the throne, she forbade Parliament to interfere in matters of religion, and barred its interference by frequent dissolutions. It must also be remembered that all the opprobrium of enforcing measures of severity against the Catholics she put upon the members of her council, who believed that the Protestantism of the kingdom should be more pronounced. These men accepted the responsibility, for, had the old religion been re-estab-

* Froude, viii. 339. † Idem, xi. 24, 127. ‡ Idem, xi. 63.

lished, they, as well-known Protestants, would have been the first victims of the reaction. They were thus consulting their own safety as well as what they considered the public welfare.*

But Elizabeth could always say with plausibility that she had been forced to play the rôle of a persecutor, and that her heart was never in the work. Whenever it was consistent with her own safety, she showed indulgence to the Catholics. Thousands of the old priests were allowed to remain in their livings by an outward conformity to the ritual of the Established Church. It was only the practice of their own form of worship which was punishable by law, and she saw to it that the laws were, as to them, never pressed beyond the letter.† But with the Puritans it was very different. They claimed, and with apparent justice, that the laws were always strained for their oppression, not by the civil powers, but by the queen and her Ecclesiastical Commission. As head of the Church, Elizabeth had authority to change the ceremonial, within certain limits; but she never used her power to relieve their tender consciences, nor would she consent that they should have relief from Parliament.

Nor was this all. The sagacious statesmen who surrounded Elizabeth believed that the Reformation in England should be pressed to its legitimate conclusion. Merely abjuring the supremacy of the pope, and changing the form of religion by statutory enactment, were, to their minds, insufficient. The old abuses of the Church

---

* When Philip organized the Armada, he made out a list of the English statesmen to be hanged after the victory. Froude, xii. 148.

† Although the saying of mass in private houses was forbidden by law, it was winked at for twenty years after Elizabeth's accession. Froude, xi. 360.

should be done away with, the all-prevailing corruption should be rooted out, and, to accomplish these ends, men of high character and of unblemished life should be selected to control the new establishment. No such counsels met the approval of the queen. She wished subservient tools; and if her bishops were men whose private or official conduct could not bear examination, they would be the more readily controlled, and the more easily turned over to Rome. A few illustrations will show their character.

Parker, her favorite Archbishop of Canterbury, left an enormous fortune, which he had accumulated during eighteen years of office by the most wholesale corruption. Among other things, he established a fixed tariff for the sale of benefices in his gift, regulated according to their value and the age of the applicant. The sales were not confined to adults, for even boys under fourteen were allowed to become purchasers, provided they would pay an increased price.* At about the time of Parker's death, in 1576, Hatton, the new favorite of the queen, cast longing eyes upon some property belonging to the Bishop of Ely. That prelate refused to give it up, even after receiving the famous letter in which Elizabeth, with an oath, threatened to unfrock him. He was brought to terms, however, by a summons before the Privy Council, and a notification from Lord North of what would be proved against him. He was to be charged, so the queen directed, with the grossest malversation in office, plundering the Church lands, selling the lead and brick from its houses, dealing dishonestly in leases, and exacting illegal charges from the ministers in his diocese. This threat was sufficient; the bishop suc-

* Froude, xi. 100.

cumbed, and we hear no more of his prosecution or removal.*

Nor were these cases at all exceptional. As we study the records of the time, one of their most striking features is the wide-spread corruption among the bishops of the Established Church. Liable to removal or suspension at the pleasure of the crown, they took care to provide for themselves and their families by selling the church timber, making long leases of the ecclesiastical lands, and in every possible manner despoiling their sees of the little property left to them by the early Reformers.†

---

* Froude, xi. 22.

† The following are a few illustrations taken from Strype's "Annals," the writings of a High-churchman, which bear out the general statements of Hallam, Froude, and others, to some of which I have referred in a former chapter. In 1585, Bishop Scambler was transferred from Peterborough to Norwich. He found that his predecessor had not only disposed of the judicial offices of the see by a patent, but had just before his departure made many unprecedented leases of the episcopal property. But Scambler's successor in Peterborough found that the same thing had been done in that diocese, the see having been impoverished by spoliations. The same year witnessed the death of the Bishop of Chichester. He died a bankrupt, having sold off the church timber until there was hardly sufficient left for firewood. These cases occurred in one year, and are mentioned in one page of Strype's "Annals," iii. 331. See also p. 467 for an account of the mode in which the Welsh bishoprics were "fleeced by the respective bishops;" also p. 463, as to the see of Durham. The bishop of the latter diocese not only despoiled the church property, but was controlled by a brother, his chancellor, "a bad man addicted to covetousness and uncleanness. He was to be bribed by money to pass over crimes presented and complained of." Aylmer, Bishop of London, cut down and sold his timber until prevented by an injunction. "When he grew old, and reflected that a large sum of money would be due from his family for dilapida-

In 1585, when six bishoprics were vacant, a correspondence passed between Lord Burghley and Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, which shows the general character of the men whom Elizabeth selected for ecclesiastical preferment. Says the Lord Treasurer: "There are to be new bishops placed in the six vacant chairs. I wish—but I cannot hope it—that the Church may take that good thereby that it hath need of. Your Grace must pardon me; for I see such worldliness in many that were otherwise affected before they came to cathedral churches, that I fear the places alter the men." To which Whitgift replied: "It is not the chair that maketh the alteration, if any there be, but the unlawful means of coming by it. . . . I doubt not but as good men, even at this day, possess some of these chairs as ever did in any age; although I will not justify all, nor yet many of them."* Bishops who had bought their seats, as is here plainly intimated, could hardly be expected to refrain from repaying themselves by plundering their sees. Had Elizabeth been actuated by a desire to bring the Established Church into contempt, so that its downfall would be mourned by no one, she certainly could have chosen no better mode of accomplishing her purpose than that of selecting such men to represent its principles.†

---

tions of the palace at Fulham, etc., he actually proposed to sell his bishopric to Bancroft (Strype's 'Aylmer,' p. 169). The latter, however, waited for his death, and had over £4000 awarded to him; but the crafty old man having laid out his money in land, this sum was never paid."—Hallam, i. 206. At this time land in England could not be taken for debt.

* Strype's "Whitgift," pp. 171, 172. No one who knows anything of Whitgift's character would ever suspect him of libelling the Church.

† During the session of Parliament, in 1581, when the nation was

But, after all, the bishops were simply following the lessons taught them by the queen. She was the great despoiler of the Church. All through her reign, we find her not only demanding from the bishops the surrender of portions of the property of their sees for the benefit of some needy favorite—and she thus robbed even the universities themselves*—but she issued numerous commissions, under which keen and unscrupulous adventurers sought out flaws in ecclesiastical titles, recovering the property for the crown and receiving as their compensation a portion of the spoils.† Besides this, although the regular revenues of the sees were very small, averaging only about a thousand pounds per annum, they were so diminished by the exactions of the queen and her courtiers, that in many cases the incumbents, without dishonesty, would have found it impossible to live. One illustration of the extent of these exactions will suffice to show their character. In 1583, the Bishop of Winchester, who held one of the richest sees in the kingdom, was complained of for spending so little money as to bring his office into disrepute. In answer to the charge he sent Lord Burghley a statement showing his income and expenditures. His net income was about £2800. Of this he paid to the queen, in first-fruits, tenths, subsidies, and benevolences, about £1900; to Leicester, £100; in annuities granted by his predecessors, "wherein Sir Francis Walsingham's fee is contained," £218; leaving for himself, after paying

---

alarmed by the Catholic revival which the Jesuits had awakened, one member gave voice to the public opinion in saying: "Were there any honesty in these prelates, in whom honesty should most be found, we should not be in our present trouble."—Froude, xi. 360.

* Strype, iii. 54.

† Idem, *passim*.

salaries and alms to the poor, just one seventh of the net income.* This system was almost as profitable to the queen as the one under which she kept a diocese vacant for years, receiving all the income.†

But there was something more than corruption in the Church. The mass of the clergy were so illiterate that, even had they been pure of life, they could have done little to elevate the people or win respect for the new establishment. This evil, too, was felt in its full force by the statesmen who tried in vain to influence the queen. They realized the fact that Protestantism

---

* Strype, iii. Appendix, p. 58.

† She thus kept the diocese of Ely vacant for eighteen years after the death of Cox. Hall, p. 117. Strype, in this connection, gives a curious letter written to the queen by Sir John Puckering, the Lord Keeper—that is, the acting Chancellor—which shows how bishoprics and their property were disposed of. Sir John desired a lease of some land belonging to the vacant bishopric of Ely, and proposed, about 1595, that the office should be filled in order to carry out his wishes. The lease, he said, would benefit him, without expense to her majesty, since the property did not belong to the crown. As to filling the see, although she would thereby lose the income, this would be made up from first-fruits, tenths, and subsidies; which, if an old man were selected for the place, would soon be payable again. In addition, by changing around some of the other old bishops, she could make a profit of several thousand pounds. Strype, iv. 247. Under a statute passed in the first year of her reign, to which reference has been made before (see p. 433), every bishop and every clergyman paid the queen at once, or in two or three annual payments, a sum equal to a year's income on his first appointment to a charge. These payments, called first-fruits, became due again on every change of diocese or parish, and to them was added a tenth of the annual income thereafter. The system had, therefore, a money value to the crown, which was perhaps no small recommendation in the eyes of a frugal monarch like Elizabeth.

must ultimately rest on general intelligence, and that the so-called reformation of the Church would prove an illusive snare, unless the people were taught to understand its meaning. But to do this teachers were needed very different from those who occupied the English pulpits. It was this conviction that led men like Burghley and Bacon, perhaps having little religion themselves, to advocate the cause of the Puritans.

The English Puritans, like their brethren in Holland and Scotland, believed in education, and it is their crowning glory. They might be narrow-minded and intolerant; had they been otherwise, they would have been false to their age and race. But wherever we find them, either in England or America, we find in their possession the school-book and the Bible. They wished, and they finally insisted, that others should believe as they did, for they could not conceive that any other belief was possible. They did not, however, desire a blind acceptance; they demanded a conscientious conviction of the truth, founded on a knowledge of their doctrines. Education, therefore, was their watchword. If you would get rid of the tares and have a crop, you must plough up the ground and sow your seed. The religious crop which the present generation is reaping would surprise these men of three centuries ago; but even the most radical thinker of to-day must give them credit for insisting on the cultivation of the soil.

But it was not the Puritans alone who, in the time of Elizabeth, desired religious instruction for the people. All the churchmen who were earnest in their belief felt the same desire. They argued that the true mode of extirpating popery, then the vital question for the nation, was by showing up its errors. They therefore advocated the general preaching and discussion of the

doctrines of the Reformation.* The queen, however, would have no such preaching or discussion. If we can judge from her actions, she wished for no new crop, but desired that the old tares should go to seed. She encouraged the study of the classics, she gave some little countenance to poetry; but of the education of the masses, or of the discussion of religious questions, she entirely disapproved.

Was this sagacity on her part, such as some historians have attributed to her, surpassing that of the ablest statesmen and most earnest churchmen of her times? Was it from any love of the Reformation that she desired to keep the people ignorant of religious truths? It has been said that she did not wish to stir up a religious turmoil, that she feared its effects upon her Catholic subjects, and that she desired to give the people time to forget the old faith and accustom themselves to the new belief. Does this explain her conduct? There might be something in such a theory had she filled the ministry with men of even reputable lives. But nothing is left of it when we recall the character of the clergy during the first half of her reign. Bakers, butchers, cooks, and stablemen, wholly illiterate, drunken and licentious,† seem hardly fitting instruments for advancing such a broad-minded religious policy. In fact, they alienated the few earnest old Catholics, instead of reconciling them to the new establishment.

One thing is very clear. Elizabeth understood full well the effects of educating a people in the doctrines of the Reformation. In 1578, Philip of Spain offered to his rebellious subjects in the Netherlands the full restoration of their civil rights provided they would return to

* Hallam, i. 200. † Idem, i. 203. Nathan Drake, p. 44.

the Church of Rome. The English queen used all her influence to have these overtures accepted. She promised, cajoled, and threatened, but all in vain. The religious question, which she pronounced of no importance, proved an insuperable obstacle. Walsingham, one of her wisest advisers, writing at this time to Burghley, said in regard to the Protestants of the Low Countries: "That which her majesty seems most to mislike of, which is the progress of religion being well considered, is the thing which shall breed their greatest strength." * But for their intense Protestantism, it would have been easy enough to turn the Hollanders back to peace and Mother Church. The queen disliked it, for the very reason which recommended it to Walsingham, that it stood in the way of reconciliation with the pope. When, in opposition to the counsels of all the men about her, whose patriotism and wisdom are undisputed, she persistently sought to suppress the growth of a corresponding spirit in England, is it not reasonable to suppose that we have here the leading motive which controlled her policy?

Although Elizabeth found little sympathy from her council in the persecutions which she and her archbishop were carrying on against the Puritans, she had always one person to spur her on. This was the Spanish ambassador, with whom her relations for many years were of the most intimate character. He had no fear of the emasculated Protestantism which he saw represented in the Established Church; what he dreaded, for the cause of Rome and Spain, was the aggressive spirit of the Puritans.

Writing to Philip in 1568, he said: "Those who call

* Froude, xi. 127.

themselves of the *religio purissima* go on increasing. They are the same as Calvinists, and they are styled Puritans because they allow no ceremonies nor any forms save those which are authorized by the bare letter of the Gospel. They will not come to the churches which are used by the rest, nor will they allow their minister to wear any marked or separate dress. Some of them have been taken up, but they have no fear of prison, and offer themselves to arrest of their own accord." The Protestants of England, he went on to say, were of many opinions, being unable to agree on any point. There was their folly, if they only saw it. He suspected that a party in the council would like to bring the queen over to their mind, so that all the Protestants in the kingdom might be united. If agreed, it would give them strength both at home and abroad. This he regarded as "a serious misfortune," and he therefore had warned the queen against these "libertines," pointing out the danger from them to herself and princes generally. "Libertines I called them, for revolt against authority in all forms is their true principle." She had been advised, he said, to give up the Confession of Augsburg—Lutheranism—and take to this other form, but he urged her not to be misled.*

This advice was very sound from a Spanish standpoint; but, although the queen accepted and acted on it, one may well doubt whether the national enemy was the wisest counsellor for England.

Fortunate it was for Elizabeth that these "libertines," as the Spaniard called them, were cast in an heroic mould. They might be harried from their homes and reduced to poverty; they might be consigned to prison, to the rack,

* De Silva to Philip, July 3d, 1568, Froude, ix. 327.

or to the gallows; but, whatever their individual wrongs, nothing could ever impel them to give aid to their country's foe, nor, while the Reformed religion was in danger, drive them into rebellion against the Protestant monarch of a Protestant State.

The year 1570 marks the close of the first distinct period in the history of English Puritanism. Elizabeth had now been eleven years upon the throne. During all that time the earnest men who desired a simpler form of worship had sought it within the Established Church. They had not questioned the supremacy of the queen, nor the authority of the bishops in religious matters; all that they asked for was liberty, in their parishes, to dispense with the wearing of vestments and the practice of ceremonies which they considered sinful. This had been denied them. They next sought to worship in a mode which they considered Scriptural, peaceably in separate congregations, and these had been broken up by force, the worshippers being visited by the punishment reserved for felons. It would have been strange, indeed, if at length some bold minds had not begun to question the system which, calling itself Protestant, bore such fruits.

Others there probably were before his time, but the man whose figure stands out most boldly on the historic page, as marking this new departure, was Thomas Cartwright, Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. He had entered that university in 1550; during the Marian persecution he left it to study law in London, and returning on the accession of Elizabeth, had been made a fellow. Sickened for a time with English theology, he went over to Geneva in 1564, and drank in the air of pure Calvinism. Returning to Cambridge, which inclined to Puritanism, he had been made professor of

divinity. He was now, although but thirty-five years of age, a profound scholar, and, what was more, a man of genius; narrow-minded in some directions, but with the ability, within his limitations, to see straight and think clear, and with the courage to express his convictions.

To his mind, the time had come to throw off shams, and denounce the intrinsic falsity as well as the incidental corruption of the religious machinery which he saw around him. The farce should be done away with of selecting bishops through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but always at the dictation of the queen.* The title bishop might be retained, Cartwright thought, but he should be reduced to his apostolic function of preaching the Gospel, while the deacon took care of the poor; both, however, to be selected by the Church, and not by the civil authorities. Ministers or bishops

---

* The system which Cartwright denounced and ridiculed three centuries ago still prevails in England. When a bishop is to be chosen, the deans and prebends of the cathedral meet to fill the vacancy, under an authorization from the queen, which, however, names the person to be selected. They enter upon their work with grave religious ceremonies, solemnly beseeching the Holy Ghost to aid them in their choice. Prayers being concluded, it is invariably found that under a spiritual guidance they have selected the person named in their *congé d'élire*. Emerson's "English Traits," chap. "Religion." One can understand the theory of the papacy, where the pope, as successor of St. Peter, claims a divine authority to name bishops; but the practice of the English Church would be ludicrous but for its element of blasphemy. Under the papal system the Almighty is supposed to make selections through his representative the pope; under the English system, the queen makes the selection through the Almighty, who is, in theory, her agent and subordinate. Among a people possessing strong religious convictions, or even endowed with a keen sense of humor, such a mummery would be impossible. See also Froude, xii. 578.

should not be licensed to preach anywhere, but each should have charge of a particular congregation. Finally, every church should be governed by its own minister and presbyters, but subject to the opinions of the other churches with which it communicated.*

Here were some of the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, an organization much at variance with the English establishment. Still, Cartwright at first taught them with caution and moderation, lecturing only to his classes in divinity, and counselling no open schism. When complained of to the court, Cecil wrote back that he saw nothing improper in his conduct, the professor appearing simply to have been giving to his pupils the results of his own studies of the New Testament.†

But Cartwright's offence went far beyond an attack upon the theoretical organization of the Church. He openly assailed its glaring abuses, and that was unpardonable. Pluralities and non-residences he denounced as impious, and the Spiritual Courts "as damnable, devilish, and detestable." "Poor men," he said, "did toil and travel, and princes and doctors licked up all." He maintained that "those who held offices should do the duties of those offices; that high places in the commonwealth belonged to merit, and that those who without merit were introduced into authority were thieves and robbers." The heads of the Houses at Cambridge could not stand his lectures, and he was suspended from his professorship. Still, the pulpit was open to him, and there his influence became greater than before. The students flocked to hear his sermons, and were carried away by his eloquence. One day he preached against

---

* Briggs's "American Presbyterianism," p. 41, and Appendix, p. 1.
† Froude, x. 116.

the vestments, the next day all but three of the Trinity students appeared without the surplice. This was too much. He was now, being deprived of his fellowship, expelled from the university, and in 1574 fled to the Continent, to escape imprisonment, remaining there until 1585.

In later years, when mellowed by time and affected by a long residence in the Netherlands, Cartwright put off much of his early acerbity of speech. But it is probably true that at this period he developed an intolerance equal to that which he encountered. He resented what he thought was persecution, and waged with his persecutors a war of pamphlets, in which the language, according to the custom of the time, was far from apostolic. Heresy he would have punished with death, for the Bible, as he read it, so commanded. Had his system been carried out to its logical conclusions, the country would have groaned under an ecclesiastical instead of a civil tyranny, for he claimed that the Church should rule the State. But his defects were those of his age and race; his earnestness, his purity of life, hatred of wrong-doing, contempt of wealth, and courage of conviction were all his own, and those of the stern men of thought and action who were in time to give a new life to England.

The teachings of the eloquent Cambridge professor mark an epoch in the history of English Puritanism; but they were not generally accepted, and, in fact, bore fruit quite slowly.* The Reformers still clung to the Established Church, and tried to do their work under its shadows.† Expelled from their livings for nonconformity,

* Green lays too much stress upon them in excusing the acts of Elizabeth.

† Cartwright himself was always opposed to any separation from

they obtained employment as preachers from the regular incumbents, too lazy or too ignorant to preach themselves, or they took refuge in the families of the country squires, where, as teachers, they exercised a powerful and lasting influence. The upper classes among the laity who cared anything about religion were, in the main, divided between the adherents of the old faith and those who, siding with the Puritans, wished the Reformation to be carried further.* Catholics being forbidden by law to sit in the House of Commons, the Puritans had a majority in that body during the whole reign of Elizabeth, and but for the overwhelming influence of the crown would have introduced great reforms in the Established Church.

In 1571, they presented an address to the queen, pointing out some of the glaring abuses which ought to be corrected. They said: "Great numbers are admitted ministers that are infamous in their lives, and among those that are of ability their gifts in many places are useless by reason of pluralities and non-residency, whereby infinite numbers of your majesty's subjects are like to perish for lack of knowledge. By means of this, together with the common blasphemy of the Lord's name, the most wicked licentiousness of life, the abuse of excommunication, the commutation of penance, the great number of atheists, schismatics daily springing up, and the increase of papists, the Protestant religion is in imminent peril." † But Elizabeth was unmoved. She did not believe in freedom of speech upon any subject. She lectured her Parliaments for discussing religious ques-

---

the establishment. He believed in controlling, and not leaving it as the Brownists did. Briggs, p. 43.

* Hallam, i. 193. † Neal.

tions, which she, as head of the Church, should alone decide, and usually managed to stifle debate in the Lower House, by imprisoning the recalcitrant members, or to throttle legislation through the lords and bishops.

We have seen in the preceding pages something of the ignorance which prevailed among the regular clergy. It is creditable to several of the bishops of the Church that, about 1571, a movement was started to correct this evil. This was a religious exercise called "prophesying." The clergy of a diocese were divided into classes or associations, under a moderator appointed by the bishop, and met once a fortnight to discuss particular texts of Scripture. A sermon was first preached, to which the public were admitted, and after their dispersion the members of the association debated the subject, the moderator finally summing up their arguments and pronouncing his determination. Such an exercise, at a time when books were few and costly and learning was at a very low ebb, might have been productive of much good. It began in Norwich, next to London the foremost stronghold of Puritanism, and rapidly extended through the kingdom. But Parker, the archbishop, told the queen that these associations, where the chief topics discussed were the errors of papacy and the doctrines of the Reformation, were no better than seminaries of Puritanism. He argued that the more opposed the people were to the papacy the more they would incline to the non-conformists, and that these exercises tended to make them so inquisitive that they would not submit to the orders of their superiors as they should.* These arguments met the cordial approval of the queen, who gave stringent orders that the prophesying should

* Neal; Hallam, i. 200.

be suppressed. It took several years to put it down completely, for some of the bishops made a stout resistance; but the queen triumphed in the end, her clergy being left as ignorant as she could well desire.*

Meantime, the work of weeding out the Puritans went on more vigorously than ever. Their books were suppressed, their preachers silenced, their private meetings broken up, and even plain citizens for listening to their sermons were dragged before the High Commission upon any refusal to conform.† These were the severities practised upon those who, agreeing with the Church authorities in matters of doctrine, differed from them only upon questions of form. For out-and-out heretics, those who denied the doctrines of the Church, a different fate was reserved.

We have seen how William of Orange protected the Anabaptists of Holland when some of the men about him would have refused them civil rights. About 1575, twenty-seven of this sect, refugees from the Continent,

---

* Hallam, i. 201, 203; Neal. Even Strype, who attempts to justify everything done by Elizabeth, admits the benefits derived from prophesying. He says: "This was practised, to the great benefit and improvement of the clergy, many of whom in those times were ignorant, both in Scripture and divinity."—Strype's "Annals of the Reformation," ii. 313. The only excuse which the queen offered for suppressing this educational system was that it had been abused in the diocese of Norwich, by the discussion of ceremonial questions. But the Bishop of Norwich showed that this charge was unfounded. Idem. It is a fact not without interest that Cornwall, the county in which, according to Neal, not a minister could preach a sermon, furnished to Parliament the two brothers Paul and Peter Wentworth, who throughout the reign of Elizabeth stood up, almost alone, for freedom of speech in religious matters. They appreciated fully the results of the royal policy.

† Hallam, i. 197.

were apprehended in a private house in London, where they had assembled for worship. Tried before the Bishops' Court for heresy, in holding blasphemous opinions as to the nature of Christ's body—believing that he brought it with him from heaven—four recanted, but eleven of the number were convicted and sentenced to be burned. One of these, a woman, gave way and was pardoned, and nine of the others had their sentences commuted to perpetual banishment. The eleventh, with one of the first four who had relapsed, was reserved for the stake. Great efforts were made to save their lives, every one admitting their inoffensiveness. The Dutch congregation interceded for them, and Foxe, the martyrologist, petitioned the queen in their behalf. But Elizabeth had for the time made friends with Spain, and was bent on showing that she had no sympathy with heresy. An example was needed to show her sincerity, and she proved inexorable. On the 22d of July, 1575, the two unhappy foreigners, who had sought England as an asylum from persecution, and whose only imputed crime was an error of theological belief, were publicly burned alive, mingling their ashes with those of the many other martyrs who have made the soil of Smithfield sacred ground.*

In the year which witnessed this tragedy, Parker, the persecuting Archbishop of Canterbury, died, and was succeeded by Grindal, a man of a very different type. He was not unfriendly to the Puritans, and was an earnest believer in the education of the clergy, and in supplying the pulpits with men capable of preaching. But his actual rule was very brief. The queen strenuously objected to his encouragement of prophesying, as well as to the number of preaching ministers whom he licensed,

* Neal, p. 186; Froude, xi. 43.

and, upon his refusing to give way, suspended him from office, the suspension lasting until shortly before his death, in 1583.* Owing partly to his influence, partly to the fact that most of the old non-conforming clergy had been silenced, and perhaps still more to fears incited by the Jesuits, who about this time began their active campaign in England, the Puritans seem to have been but little disturbed for several years, although, in 1581, some acts were passed by Parliament which, aimed primarily at the Catholics, bore heavily upon the non-conformists in later days.†

But upon the death of Grindal a prelate took his place who was well qualified to carry out all the wishes of the queen. This was John Whitgift, a man who did more to develop the aggressive Puritanism of later years, with its outgrowth of independent sects, than any other person except Elizabeth herself. Whitgift had been Master of Trinity College when Cartwright was its Professor of Divinity. He was ignorant, probably not even knowing Greek;‡ was as narrow-minded as he was ignorant, but full of zeal for the establishment. He had been chiefly instrumental in driving Cartwright from Cambridge, and had been subsequently distinguished for some violent pamphlets against the Puritans. As a reward for these services he was made Bishop of Worcester. Now, Elizabeth had determined that, while "she would suppress the papistical religion so that it should

---

* Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 201. In the opinion of Elizabeth, two or three preachers in a county were enough.

† One of these acts imposed a fine of twenty pounds per month for not attending the Established Church. Another made it felony, punishable with death, to libel the queen.

‡ Hallam's "Const. Hist.," i. 202.

not grow, she would root out Puritanism and the favorers thereof."* For the latter purpose she could have chosen no better instrument than her "little black parson," as she used to call him.† As for the Catholics, they were so pleased with his work that Throgmorton, who was executed for conspiracy in the following year, called him "the meetest bishop in the realm;" and, about the same time, Mary Stuart exultingly exclaimed: "Nothing is lacking, but only the setting-up of the mass again."‡

Whitgift began his official duties with great vigor. He was appointed archbishop in September, 1583; in October he issued orders for the enforcement of religious discipline throughout the realm. One of these orders prohibited all preaching, reading, or catechising in private houses, whereto any not of the same family shall resort, "seeing the same was never permitted as lawful under any Christian magistrate." As all public gatherings had been suppressed before, it was now intended to prevent the assembling of neighbors to read the Bible or for any religious services. This order, however, was aimed only at private individuals; the others which accompanied it were directed at the clergy. They were all to subscribe a declaration, in writing, that the Book of Common

---

* Strype's "Whitgift, Annals," iv. 242. We shall see in later chapters something of the dangers which at this particular time threatened England from abroad. They served to arouse the courage of the nation at large, but seem to have turned the thoughts of Elizabeth more than ever to the idea of reconciliation with Rome. The suppression of the Puritans was a necessary step in this direction.

† Froude, x. 116, 117; Hallam, i. 202.

‡ Robert Beal, Clerk of the Council, to Whitgift, May 7th, 1584; Strype's "Whitgift," App. book iii. No. 6.

Prayer contained nothing contrary to the Word of God, and a promise that they would use its Form of Prayer and no other; also an approval of the Thirty-nine Articles, set out by the queen's authority in 1562, and a declaration that all such articles were agreeable to the Word of God. In addition, it was provided that no one should exercise ecclesiastical functions unless he had been admitted to holy orders according to the manner of the Church of England.*

It would have been difficult even for Whitgift, in his ignorance of law, to have framed a document more full of illegal exactions than was this. The statutes of the realm required the use of the Book of Common Prayer, but did not require any such declaration or promise as it demanded. Neither did they require such an acceptance of the Thirty-nine Articles. When a bill for the latter purpose was brought into Parliament, it was amended so as to provide simply for a subscription to "all the Articles of Religion which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith and the doctrine of the Sacraments."† As for ordination according to the "manner of the Church of England," the very statute which required a qualified subscription to the Articles admitted, by implication, the validity of other ordination. Hundreds of old priests were still in their livings who had never been reordained, and many Protestants were preaching who had been ordained only in Scotland or upon the Continent.‡

---

* Strype's "Whitgift," pp. 114, 117.

† 13 Eliz. cap. xii. sec. 1.

‡ The words of the statute are: "That every person, under the degree of bishop, who doth or shall pretend to be a priest or minister of God's holy Word and Sacraments, by reason of any other form of

The primate did not intend by these orders to trouble the Catholics: they could be reached when necessary by special statutes. He was bent on rooting out the Puritans, especially those who had been ordained abroad. Ministers suspected of non-conforming tendencies were brought before him and the other bishops by the score. They offered to subscribe to the Articles and to the Prayer-book, so far as the law required subscription. They showed that the Prayer-book then in use contained additions not ratified by Parliament; that its novel statement that "children being baptized have all things necessary to their salvation, and be undoubtedly saved," was, in their opinion, contrary to the Word of God, and therefore they refused to say the contrary. But Whitgift cared as little for the law as his royal mistress. In most cases he would take nothing but an unconditional submission. This was refused by many, and hundreds of parishes were left without a preacher.*

But even this was not sufficient for the queen and her archbishop. The Act of Supremacy, passed in 1559,

---

institution, consecration, or ordering than the form set forth by Parliament," etc., "shall . . . subscribe to all the Articles of Religion which only concern the true Christian faith and the doctrine of the Sacraments, . . . upon pain of being *ipso facto* deprived, and his ecclesiastical promotions void as if he were naturally dead."—13 Eliz. cap. xii. sec. 1. See the whole subject of the illegality of these orders ably discussed in "The Puritans and Queen Elizabeth," by Samuel Hopkins, of Massachusetts, vol. ii. chaps. xiii. and xiv. The form of this book has, perhaps, obscured its real value as the work of a painstaking, conscientious scholar.

* According to Neal, chap. vii., in six counties alone—Norfolk, Suffolk, Sussex, Essex, Kent, and Lincolnshire—two hundred and thirty-three ministers were suspended, of whom some were allowed time for reconsideration, but forty-nine were absolutely deprived at once.

which vested all ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the crown, empowered the queen to execute it by commissioners, in such manner and for such time as she should direct. Under this act several commissions had been created, sitting for limited periods, but with constantly augmented authority. Now, however, at the suggestion of Whitgift, a permanent commission was established which, under the name of the High Commission Court, continued its obnoxious life until hacked down by the Long Parliament. This court was created on the 9th of December, 1583. It consisted of forty-four commissioners, twelve of whom were bishops, some privy-councillors, and the rest partly clergymen and partly civilians. To any three, one being a bishop, power was given to punish all persons absenting themselves from church in violation of the statutes; to visit and reform heresies and schisms according to law; to deprive all beneficed persons holding any doctrines contrary to the Thirty-nine Articles; to punish incest, adulteries, and all offences of the kind; to examine all suspected persons on their oaths; and to punish all who should refuse to appear before them, or to obey their orders, by spiritual censure, or by discretionary fine or imprisonment.*

In nothing did this Commission fall behind Alva's famous Council of Blood, created fifteen years before, except in the power of punishing by death; and in the condition of the English prisons of that day even this power was indirectly granted, for the jail-fever was as fatal as the axe of the executioner. Of its origin, the unimpassioned Hallam says, "the primary model was the Inquisition itself." †

---

* Hallam, i. 204. † Idem.

Furnished with such an engine, Whitgift was not slow in putting it to use. In view of the provision which allowed the examination of suspected persons under their own oaths, he proceeded to frame a set of twenty-four interrogatories, to be administered to all persons supposed to be inclined to non-conformity. In May, 1584, all was ready, and the tribunal began its sessions. The suspected clergymen, mostly young men, as Whitgift said, were summoned before the court. They were not shown the interrogatories, nor advised of what charge was made against them. First, they were sworn to tell the truth; then the questioning began, the attempt being made to discover whether they had ever omitted the ring in marriage, the cross in baptism, the wearing of the surplice, or any of the prayers of the Church; whether they doubted any of its articles; and, finally, the victim was interrogated as to his future intentions.*

Reports of what was going on came to the ears of Lord Burghley in July. He then sent for the interrogatories, and read them for the first time. He was far from being a Puritan himself—in fact, he had been very friendly to the archbishop—but now he could not restrain his indignation. Throwing aside his customary diplomatic caution, he sat down and in an earnest letter told Whitgift very plainly what he thought of his proceedings.† But little did Whitgift care for

* Strype's "Whitgift," Appendix.

† "Your twenty-four articles," he said, "I find so curiously penned, so full of branches and circumstances, as I think the Inquisitors of Spain use not so many questions to comprehend and to trap their preys. . . . I desire the peace of the Church. I desire concord and unity in the exercise of our religion. I favor no sensual and wilful recusants. But I conclude that, according to my simple judgment,

Burghley, or even for the whole council, which remonstrated against his action. He had his commission and behind him stood the queen. Behind her stood the acts of Parliament which without her consent could not be repealed.

How the work resulted is shown in a petition which came up to the council from the county of Essex. Our ministers having been taken away, it said, "we have none left but such as we can prove unfit for the office. They are altogether ignorant, having been either popish priests, or shiftless men thrust in upon the ministry when they knew not how else to live—serving-men and the basest of all sorts; and, what is most lamentable, as they are men of no gifts, so they are of no common honesty, but rioters, dicers, drunkards, and such like, of offensive lives." * Incited by this petition, the council made an examination for itself, and, on the 20th of September, 1584, sent to his Grace of Canterbury and to the Lord Bishop of London a letter signed by Burghley, Howard, Shrewsbury, Crofts, Warwick, Hatton, Leicester, and Walsingham. This was no Puritan document, but an official statement, made by Protestants and Catholics conjointly, of the condition in which they found the Church, not in Essex alone, but throughout the kingdom. As to this particular county, there was enclosed a list of learned and zealous ministers deprived and suspended, and another list "of persons having cures, being far unmeet for any offices in the Church."

---

this kind of proceeding is too much savoring of the Romish Inquisition; and is rather a device to seek for offenders than to reform any. This is not the charitable instruction that I thought was intended."—July 1st, 1584, Strype's "Whitgift," App. book iii. No. 9.

* Neal.

"Against all these sorts of lewd, evil, unprofitable, and corrupt members, we hear of no inquisitions, nor any kind of proceeding to the reformation of these horrible offences in the Church; but yet of great diligence, yea, and extremity, used against those that are known diligent preachers. . . . We do hear daily of the like in generality in many other places." *

In Aylmer, Bishop of London, within whose diocese was the county of Essex, the archbishop had a worthy coadjutor. He was one of the prelates whose official dishonesty reflected the greatest discredit upon the Church.† But, whatever his faults as a man, no one could question his zeal against the non-conformists. In 1584, he suspended thirty-eight clergymen in Essex alone—men earnest in Christian work and of unblemished life—for refusing to wear the surplice. As he was absent from the city when the council's communication was received, the archbishop replied that he could not make full answer to it; that he hoped the information to be in most parts unjust; that if the ministers were as reported, they were worthy of grievous punishment, and that he would not be slack therein; but he added—innocently revealing the character of his commission—that none, or few, had been presented for any such misdemeanors.‡

Nothing upon the record shows that anything was

---

* Strype's "Whitgift," pp. 166, 167.

† "The violence of Aylmer's temper was not redeemed by many virtues; it is impossible to exonerate his character from the imputations of covetousness, and of plundering the revenues of his see—faults very prevalent among the bishops of that period."—Hallam, i. 205.

‡ Strype's "Whitgift," pp. 167, 168.

done after the return of Aylmer;* but the action of this prelate in the succeeding year tells what he thought of such complaints as those which came up from the factious Puritans of his diocese.

Thomas Carew, a minister of Hatfield, in the county of Essex, had angered the bishop by informing him that in his county, "within the compass of sixteen miles, were twenty-two non-resident ministers, and thirty who were insufficient for their office and of scandalous lives, while at the same time there were nineteen who were silenced for refusing subscription." In 1585, he was hauled up before the High Commission. A clergyman who would thus criticise the action of his superiors must naturally belong to the suspected party, and for such men the famous interrogatories had been prepared by Whitgift. Being offered the oath preliminary to his examination, he, as many others did before and after him, refused to take it, on the ground that under the law of England from the time of Magna Charta no man could be compelled to criminate himself. For this contempt he was committed to prison without bail, and the bishop sent down another minister to take his place.

The patron of the living objected to this interference with his legal rights, and declined to recognize the new incumbent. He, too, was sent to prison, and the bishop remained master of the field. Very soon, however, Mr. Carew's successor was detected in adultery, and the parishioners presented a request for his removal and the reinstatement of their former clergyman. Aylmer replied that "for all the livings he had he would not

---

* Hopkins, ii. 436.

deprive a poor man of his living for the fact of adultery." *

This incident, occurring in the centre of English civilization, furnishes a suggestive illustration of the conflict which was going on within the English Church. On the one side stood a people asking for religious teaching; on the other, a hierarchy discouraging all such teaching, and telling the nation that even morality was of no importance when compared with forms and ceremonies. The Puritans, as developed in later days, have been often reviled and ridiculed for attempting to find a rule of life in what they regarded as the law of God laid down in the Old Testament. Few persons to-day will hold them blameworthy for believing that obedience to the Decalogue was of more vital importance than the wearing of a surplice or the use of the cross in baptism.

Here, for the present, we may leave this class of nonconformists. We have seen a little of the mode in which Elizabeth and her prelates dealt with these men, who then alone went by the name of Puritans—men who had no thought of leaving the Established Church, but who for nearly thirty years had been struggling for some liberty of worship under the protection of the law. Time and again they had appealed to Parliament for redress, and time and again bold members had stood up in the House of Commons to plead their cause, only to be sent to the Tower for calling in question the spiritual supremacy of the crown. Still, the repressive measures of the government were comparatively mild until Whitgift came upon the scene. He told Burghley, in 1584, that "not severity, but lenity, hath bred this

* Brook's "Lives of the Puritans," ii. 166, citing MSS. Register, pp. 653, 654; Hopkins, iii. 33.

schism in the Church,"* and he evidently expected that a different policy would heal the breach. Perhaps he was right; perhaps, too, if he had been dealing only with Englishmen, undisturbed by any foreign influence, his policy of repression by fine and imprisonment, which was carried on systematically throughout the kingdom, might have proved effectual, and England might have been purged of Puritanism.

But for some years England had not been left to herself to work out her problems alone, as in preceding centuries. We have seen how the Catholics from the Continent were affecting one part of the community, inculcating a spirit of resistance to authority little known before among the middle classes. On the Protestant side there was also a direct foreign influence at work, which was even more powerful, although little noticed by historians. In the next chapter we shall see something of its character; and, later on, something of its results in the development of a new class of reformers very different from the early Puritans.

---

* Strype's "Whitgift," p. 172.

CHAPTER X

ENGLISH PURITANISM

INFLUENCE FROM THE NETHERLANDS, 1558–1585

Thus far, in considering the foreign influences which affected the Puritanism of England during the early days of Elizabeth, we have confined our view mainly to the theological stream which flowed directly from the great fountain-head of Calvinism at Geneva. This stream colored all the theology of the island, and so every writer who has treated of this period has been compelled to recognize its presence. But creeds are only lifeless words. The metaphysical doctrines which the Marian exiles brought back from Switzerland, unlike discoveries in science or the arts, were in themselves of little value. Posterity owes to these men a great debt of gratitude for their devotion to what they considered truth. Many of them, in addition to their theological teachings, did a noble work in trying to reform the morals of their native land. But, unless outside influences had reinforced their efforts, the labors of these early reformers would have passed away, and left but a faint impression. Certain it is, that the wave of Protestantism which came into England with the accession of Elizabeth affords no adequate explanation of the course of subsequent events, which were even more remarkable in the State than in the Church.

Nothing in the development of English Puritanism is

more suggestive than the change which came over its character in the space of a comparatively few years. In its early days it dwelt among the learned, and to a considerable extent among the powerful and wealthy; in the next century, it had shifted its abode almost entirely to the dwellings of the middle classes and the poor. In this particular, the movement was somewhat peculiar. Early Christianity began at the bottom and worked upwards, so have most religious revivals since that time.* Such has been the growth of the Quakers, the Baptists, and the more modern Methodists. But Puritanism in England began at the top and worked downwards. For years after Elizabeth ascended the throne, some of the most prominent statesmen, many of the most learned bishops, and almost all of the most distinguished divines, were Reformers or Puritans, who, even if they outwardly conformed, yet advocated changes in the discipline and ceremonial of the establishment. These men, and others like them, laid down the doctrines of the Anglican Church on lines so strictly Calvinistic that John Knox, or even Calvin himself, could have found little in them of which to disapprove.

But in a few years all this was changed. During the reign of Elizabeth's immediate successor the old Calvinistic theology fell into disfavor; under Charles I. it was entirely repudiated by the ambitious divines of the Church who sought high preferment.† Meantime, the men who wished to reform the discipline or service of the Church were no longer found among the magnates

---

* I do not now speak of the so-called religious movements, which were really political, as was much of the Protestantism in France and the Lutheranism of Germany.

† Macaulay, i. 74; Buckle, Amer. ed., 1864, i. 611.

of the land. Prelate vied with courtier in proclaiming the doctrine that Episcopacy was ordained of God, and that the only fault in its servive was too great a simplicity. The theology of Calvin had worked downwards, and so had the demand for a simpler form of worship. To be sure, there were still non-conforming ministers of education, scholars, bred at the universities, with all the learning and culture of the time, but the majority of the Puritans were taken from a different class. The men who dethroned their king, and who, under the Commonwealth, made the name of England respected wherever a European tongue was spoken, sprang from the loins of the common people. Look over the list of the famous soldiers, sailors, and civilians of that time, and we find not men of lofty lineage, but, for the greater part, small landed proprietors, brewers, bakers, tailors, merchants, even cobblers, tinkers, draymen, and body servants.* The Roundhead, whose appearance and language are familiar to every reader, was a very different character, externally regarded, from the courtly and scholarly Reformers of the early days of Elizabeth. The latter represent English Puritanism of the third quarter of the sixteenth century; the former show what it had become in the second quarter of the seventeenth. The causes of this change seem worthy of more consideration than they have generally received.

How Puritanism almost died out among the wealthy and the learned of England can be readily understood. As we have seen, the exiles who returned from the Continent upon the accession of Elizabeth represented most of the learning of the realm. They were numerous

* See Buckle, i. 474, for an extended account of the origin and pursuits of the men prominent in the Commonwealth.

enough—some eight hundred having fled from the persecutions of Mary — to have produced, under favorable conditions, a marked effect. Almost to a man they desired a reformation of the Church, far beyond the point to which it had been carried under Henry or his son Edward. Parliament favored them, for the nation had still ringing in its ears the agonizing cries of the martyrs as the flames blazed up at Smithfield. Had the queen been also their ally, and had she filled the pulpits with men of the same stamp, England would have been made Protestant in fact as well as in name, the abuses of the crown would have been gradually corrected, and with general education, as in Scotland and Holland, the people would have been elevated to a higher plane. There might in the process have been disorder, as men then and ever since have affected to believe, but postponement only brought on the tempest, which, in the next century, swept the land, because a reformation, culminating in the divine right of kings and the celestial origin of the Established Church, was in truth little more than a monstrous sham.

But Elizabeth, advised by Spain and backed by her Catholic favorites, was strong enough to prevent any open change. Still, there was a silent revolution to be dreaded, one which might come about if the people were instructed in religious questions. To prevent this also her measures seemed well directed. The men who were intellectually inclined to schemes of Church reforms, but who had no intensity of conviction, were easily disposed of. Some of them were placed in bishoprics, others in lucrative livings. They soon discovered that if they were to hold on to the good things of this life they must obey the wishes of the queen. The lesson was learned, and the zeal of many was abated forever. Rather than

surrender their comfortable surroundings, they were content to swim with the current, and let the Reformation take care of itself. The new men coming into the ministry saw that the path to preferment lay, not through scholarship, eloquence, or piety, but through the practice of the courtier's arts. They, too, learned their lesson, and the second generation was little vexed by reformers in the high places of the Church.*

But there was another class, much more difficult to deal with—men who could neither be bribed nor flattered into silence. It is easy enough to-day, when forms and ceremonies have lost much of their power, to speak of them as narrow-minded, because they would not wear the old priestly robes, nor use rites which kept alive the recollections of the ancient Church. They were wiser than their modern critics and understood their age. They sought a separation from the papacy as complete as that which the Israelites effected when they placed a sea and a wilderness between themselves and the Egyptians. Elizabeth also took in the situation as well. She was determined that there should be no such separation. The ships of her reforms were too valuable to be burned; they might be useful for a return voyage to Rome. The zealots who persisted in thwarting her plans could be dealt with in only one manner. They must be suppressed at any cost.

Mary had attempted to crush out heresy by force, but such a general persecution as she had carried on, even if possible, would have defeated its object. Elizabeth committed no such blunder. The stake and the axe make

* The reforms proposed at the accession of James I., by about one ninth of the clergy, were opposed by the whole bench of bishops and both the universities.

picturesque sufferers. It is the blood of the martyrs that in all ages has been the seed of a Church. A canonized saint appeals to the popular imagination. His ashes require neither food nor raiment; they ask for nothing but a little earth, sympathy, pity, tears, remembrance. But a living martyr, made to suffer for his opinions, occupies a very different position. He requires a continued, substantial support, and, however fervent may be the first feelings in his behalf, to carry on a work of charity for years calls for something more than sympathy or pity; it presupposes in a people a depth of religious conviction little known among the English masses of the sixteenth century.

When, therefore, Elizabeth drove the reforming divines from their livings, forbade their formation of separate congregations, and left them to wander about the country as itinerant preachers and schoolmasters, while she also, in the main, frowned upon the men in civil life who upheld their doctrines, she adopted the most effective form of persecution which could be practised on her people. It was pursued systematically and persistently for many years. In time its results became very marked in one direction. When the Marian exiles died off they left few successors among the scholars of the land. We hear little more of deep learning among the Puritans, or of Puritanism among the upper classes. Reform was no longer fashionable.

But although the policy of Elizabeth explains how Puritanism died out among the prelates of the Church, and how it came to leave the habitations of the wise and great, it does not explain how it came to dwell among the lowly, and why it spread in spite of persecution. These are different and more important questions. The teaching of a Calvinistic theology by the Genevan ex-

iles is not an adequate explanation, for the teachers were too few in number to have produced the acknowledged result, and the people were in no condition to be affected by religious dogmas. In truth, when we consider the general condition of the people, the wonder is that Puritanism, as a religious and political force, was not entirely crushed out in England while Elizabeth was on the throne. It had little lodgment among the masses. They had, to be sure, the remembrance of the persecution under Mary, but that remembrance became fainter year by year. Very few of them could read, and every attempt was made to keep them ignorant. Left to themselves, unaffected by any influence from abroad, except that which we have already noticed, it is probable that, even if they had not returned to Catholicism, we should hear nothing of the movement which in the next century gave birth to the Commonwealth.

If now we leave England and cross the Channel to the Netherlands, we shall perhaps discover the origin of the leading foreign influence which kept alive the spirit of English Puritanism, and which ultimately shaped its character.

As we have seen in a former chapter, the Reformation in the Low Countries began at the bottom, among the artisans in the cities, and the tillers of the soil in the rural districts. Quite early there began to pour into England a little stream of these enlightened and religious workmen. The regions to which they were always attracted were the low, swampy lands on the eastern coast, which reminded them of home. There they built their dikes, dug out canals, and gave to a district in Lincolnshire the name of Holland. They swarmed into Norfolk, and laid the foundations of the weaving industry, which made Norwich the second city in the king-

dom. When Wyclif arose, in the fourteenth century, to preach the doctrines of a reformed faith, he found most of his adherents among these weavers. In fact, during the persecution of the Lollards more persons suffered death at the stake in Norfolk than in all the other counties of England put together.* In a few years after Wyclif's death the Lollard preachers were suppressed, and their sect disappeared from public view. But in the low districts on the eastern coast, where the Netherlanders had settled, the reforming spirit still survived. So late as 1520, Longland, bishop of Lincoln, reported that Lollardism was especially vigorous and obstinate in his diocese, where more than two hundred heretics were once brought before him in the course of a single visitation.†

When, a century and a half after the death of Wyclif, Charles V. began his persecution of the Protestants in the Netherlands, which was intensified under his successor, the little stream of emigration from across the Channel swelled into a mighty river. In 1560, it was estimated that England contained 10,000 refugees from Flanders, with their ministers and preachers, and in 1562 the number had increased to over 30,000.‡ How many came over in the next few years cannot be accurately determined, but Davies, upon the best foreign authorities, estimates that before the termination of Alva's rule over one hundred thousand heads of families had left the

---

* Roger's "Story of Holland," p. 51.

† "The Beginnings of New England," John Fiske, p. 62. Most of the victims of Bloody Mary came also from the manufacturing districts of the South and East. Green, "History of the English People," vol. ii. book vi. chap. ii.

‡ Reports of the Spanish Ambassador, Froude, vii. 270, 413.

Netherlands, a majority of whom found a home in England.* A census taken by the lord-mayor of London in 1568, the year after Alva's arrival in the Netherlands, shows that of 6704 foreigners then in the city and its vicinity, 5225 were from the Low Countries.† Elizabeth did not encourage their remaining in London, where, at a later day, they flocked in such numbers as to attract the notice of the Spanish ambassador, and so dispersed the new-comers through the country.‡ In the first quarter of the next century, London, in a population comparatively small, numbering probably not 130,000 inhabitants, contained not fewer than 10,000 foreigners.§ In 1571, there were in Norwich alone, by actual count, 3925 Dutch and Walloons.‖ In 1587, the number had risen to 4679, making a majority of the population.¶ They located by thousands in the Cinque Ports—that is, Dover, Sandwich, Hastings, Romney, and Hythe.** In Sandwich

---

* Davies's "Holland," i. 567. Green puts the number in England at over 50,000. "Hist. of the English People," vol. ii. book vi. chap. v.

† Strype's "Annals," vol. iv. Supplement, p. 1.

‡ Idem, ii. 387.

§ Nicholas's "Pedigree of the English People," p. 538. This author says that they were mostly Huguenots, but at that time the great French emigration had not taken place. The Walloons from the Netherlands were often called Huguenots in England, as in Canterbury, for example, and this probably causes the confusion. We are told by the Duc de Sully, the great French minister, that when he visited Canterbury, in 1603, he found that two thirds of the inhabitants were Netherland refugees. To this circumstance he attributed the superior civilization and refinement of manners which he noticed in that city. "Works," tome iv. lib. xiv. p. 217.

‖ Blomefield's "Hist. of County Norfolk," iii. 282, 291, quoted in Dexter's "Congregationalism," p. 72.

¶ Southerden Burn, p. 69.

** Green's "Hist. of the English People," vol. ii. book vi. chap. v.

there were 351 Netherland families in 1582.* So late as 1645, after Laud had driven great numbers away, there were 700 communicants in the Dutch Church at Colchester, 500 in Sandwich, and 900 in the Walloon Church at Canterbury.† These are but scattering statistics, gathered at a time when the census was unknown in England, but they are suggestive. The exiles were settled all through the southern and eastern counties, not only in the towns, but in the rural districts.‡

These men were not theologians, like the English divines who about the same time returned from their exile upon the Continent. Probably few, if any of them, except their ministers, had been educated at a university. They took no part in public affairs, and their advent raised not the slightest ripple upon the sea of politics. In fact, but for its effect upon the material prosperity of the nation, it may be doubted whether this influx of foreign artisans would have been deemed worthy of the notice of historians. The effect in this direction, however, was very marked, for with the arrival of these Netherlanders there opens the first chapter in the industrial history of modern England.

In contrast with the Pilgrim Fathers, who in the next century found the struggle for existence so severe in Leyden, each of these refugees was the master of some handicraft. The people among whom they set-

---

* "Even in its present decay Sandwich is quaint and Flemish."—Goadby's "England of Shakespeare," p. 38.

† Southerden Burn, p. 41.

‡ "The prevailing name of Walker is distinct evidence of a large Flemish settlement in Lancashire and Yorkshire."—Goadby's "England," p. 37.

tled knew almost nothing of manufactures, except the weaving of some coarse grades of cloth, and in agriculture they were little more advanced. These foreigners first revealed to them the possibilities of the mechanical arts. In London, they made window glass, pins and needles, beaver hats, gloves, and fine furniture; in Colchester, baize, needles, and parchment; in Honiton, and elsewhere in Devonshire, Flemish lace; in Mortlake, arras; in Fulham, tapestry; in Maidstone, linen thread; in Sheffield, steel and iron; and in Sandwich, Leeds, and Norwich, baize, serges, flannels, silks, and bombazines.* Others again showed the English fishermen the art of curing herring, the English farmer how to cultivate his land, how to raise vegetables for the table, grasses and roots for the subsistence of his cattle during winter. Even their wives taught women how to starch their clothing.

Later on came another class of emigrants, made up of the merchants of the Netherlands, by whom commerce had for centuries been cultivated as a science. After the fall of Antwerp and the banishment of her Protestant population, it was estimated that a third of her traders were to be seen on the London Ex-

---

* Goadby's "England of Shakespeare," p. 38. Southerden Burn, pp. 4, 195, 197, 202, 205, 208, 252, etc. When Elizabeth visited Sandwich, in 1573, a hundred or more of children, Dutch and English, standing on a scaffold erected on the wall of the school-house yard, showed the manner of spinning fine yarn, much to the delight of her majesty and the nobility and ladies. Burn, p. 207. When she visited Norwich, in 1578, there were among other shows and pageants, the "artisan strangers' pageant," representing seven looms weaving worsted, russels, darnix (diaper linen), mackado, lace, caffa, and fringes, with various other devices. Blomefield, cited Burn, p. 69.

change.* Under these teachers the English slowly learned that agriculture, manufactures, and commerce are a surer and more enduring source of wealth than wool-raising and piracy. It took many years to learn this lesson, but in the end the pupil proved worthy of the master.

These results of a Netherland influence upon England are universally conceded. They cannot be denied, for the proof is too direct; they cannot be overlooked, for the teachings of these foreigners lie at the foundation of that material prosperity in which her people take such pride. But this influence extended far beyond a first lesson in the industrial arts. The mere introduction of manufactures, commerce, and a system of scientific agriculture would have availed little to the nation but for the awakening of the religious and moral principles which accompanied their introduction. It was Protestant England that ultimately controlled the ocean and the markets of the world, colonized America, and girded the earth with an empire. These Netherlanders helped to make her Protestant, and thus laid a lasting basis for her wealth; but at the same time they did even a greater work than this, for in helping to make her Protestant they also helped to make her free.

How the religious influence was exerted can be readily understood if we only keep in mind the conditions of the problem.

No people on earth have a higher order of virtues than the English middle classes. They have a courage which never falters, an earnestness of purpose which brooks no obstacles, a love of justice and fair play, a devotion to home and country, and an instinctive moral-

---

* Green's "Hist. of the English People," vol. ii. book vi. chap. v.

ity and real belief in a Higher Power which are not so common among the Latin races. These are national traits of character; they existed three centuries ago—some of them, to be sure, in a rudimentary form—but all enveloped in an intellectual and religious darkness, the density of which, in view of the progress made by the nation since that time, it is very difficult for one now to realize. The masses, however much they might wish for light, had almost no schools to which they could send their children, almost no preachers for their own instruction in morality and religion. Among such a people, these Netherlanders settled down and made their homes. They came from a land where education was universal. Each man brought his Bible, which he could read for himself and neighbors. Earnestness they had, for they came not to better their condition, but simply to find religious freedom. They were not paupers seeking alms, they were independent and self-supporting, coming from a country where beggars were unknown. Their daily life was a sermon on the Christian virtues of industry, temperance, and chastity.*

Never has the world beheld another missionary work on such a scale as this, nor one where the conditions were all so favorable. Modern churches send out teachers to convert the heathen, but such teachers labor under almost insuperable disadvantages. If they seek out savage tribes, an abysmal gulf of ignorance and barbarism stands between them, which it seems impossible to bridge. If they go to India or

---

* When Archbishop Parker visited Sandwich in 1563, he wrote to a friend that the Dutch and Walloons there were very godly on the Sabbath day, and busy in their work on the week day. Strype's "Parker," fol. 139.

China, the so-called heathen, from their thousands of years of civilization, look down with something like contempt on their semi-civilized instructors. In each quarter the difference is too great between the teacher and the scholar. But no such gulf separated the Netherlanders from the English. The distance in civilization between them was very marked, to be sure, but it was a difference in degree and not in kind. The people were of much the same race, and by nature fitted for the same pursuits. Their languages, too, were so much alike that it was almost as easy for an Englishman to understand a Dutchman as to understand a native of some distant county of his own island.*

In view of these facts, one can readily appreciate the influence which was exerted upon the people of their adopted land by these refugees, who numbered probably from fifty to seventy-five thousand heads of families. Elizabeth disliked their religious opinions, and had no sympathy with them as rebels against their sovereign. But she had the sagacity to foresee the material advantages of their presence, and on this account made to them concessions which were denied to the native-born Puritans. They were permitted freedom of worship in their own congregations, ministered to by their own preachers. Each artisan was by law required to take at least one English apprentice. These apprentices be-

* Meteren, the historian, who lived many years in London, called the English language "broken Dutch." Motley's "United Netherlands," i. 308. During the reign of Elizabeth, the militia summoned from different parts of the island found it difficult to understand even the word of command given by officers from districts other than their own. Goadby's "England of Shakespeare," p. 83. The resemblance of the Dutch to the English was even more marked three centuries ago than it is to-day.

came members of the family, according to the good custom of the time, and were subjected to a home religious training. Distributed in little colonies, through the southern and eastern sections of the island, each congregation and each family thus became a centre, from which spread out ever-widening waves of moral, intellectual, and religious light.

London and Norwich, in which the Netherlanders made their most important settlements, were the chief strongholds of English Puritanism. From the latter city went out the first Brownist or Separatist colony to Holland. It was in the adjoining county of Lincoln that the Pilgrim Fathers organized their early congregation, and the same section furnished the great body of the Puritans who settled New England and gave it its distinctive character. The low districts about the Humber and the Wash, reclaimed from the ocean by the Hollanders, were always hot-beds of non-conformity; here was the original Boston; near by was Cambridge, the home of Puritanism, commemorated across the sea in a new Cambridge, the seat of Harvard College, while Oxford, far removed, was High Church, if not papistical.

Nor was the influence of these exiles confined to the religious field. They came from a land filled with cities which, until the days of Alva, had been the home of civil liberty; where trade was unshackled by monopolies or arbitrary impositions; where justice was impartially administered, imprisonment by royal warrant unknown, the pardon of criminals for money unheard of; where liberty of debate in their legislatures was unquestioned, and where taxes had been imposed only with the consent of the governed. They came to a land where almost every right was trampled under foot; where civil liberty, if it ever existed, was little more

than a dim tradition. How their influence must have been exerted can be readily imagined.

So early as 1559, Cecil remarked that "those who depend on the making of cloths are of worse condition to be quietly governed than the husbandmen." * This was in the infancy of English manufactures. As time went on, the task of government became less easy. The opposition to the arbitrary power of the crown grew

---

* Froude, viii. 442. Cardinal Wolsey learned this lesson earlier. In 1525, Henry VIII. aimed his most deadly blow at English liberty. In defiance of law and without the intervention of Parliament, he appointed commissioners with instructions to collect the sixth part of all the property in the kingdom, payable in money, plate, or jewels, according to the last valuation. The wealthy classes were mostly cowed into submission, but the artisans of Suffolk, men living by the manufacture of coarse cloth, rose in open rebellion. Their armed protest proved effectual, and the obnoxious measure was abandoned. Of this event Hallam says, "If Wolsey, therefore, could have procured the acquiescence of the nation under this yoke, there would probably have been an end of Parliaments for all ordinary purposes. But the courage and love of freedom natural to the English Commons, speaking in the hoarse voice of tumult, though very ill supported by their superiors, preserved us in so great a peril." —"Constitutional Hist.," i. 36. Knight adds, "The despot now learned that his absolute rule was to have some limit. But for the artisans of Suffolk, England at this period would probably have passed into the condition of France, where the abuse of the royal power had long deprived the people of their rights."—"Popular Hist. of England," ii. 303. John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, went from Suffolk County. It is an interesting fact that both of his grandfathers, paternal and maternal, were clothiers, a name then applied to capitalists who employed men to weave cloth for them in their own little workshops. "Life and Letters of John Winthrop," by Robert C. Winthrop, i. 17, 47. Suffolk, like Norfolk, was a favorite home of the Netherland refugees, who followed their trades in its small villages.

with the development of the industrial classes. The tiller of the soil, as Irish history has shown, can exist even when denied almost every human right. But manufactures and commerce require the air of freedom. When Elizabeth introduced the Netherland artisans into England, she was moved only by material considerations. She sought a share of the wealth that had made the Low Countries the treasury of the world. The wealth came, but with it the ideas and spirit that in the next century bred a revolution.

But we are not left to mere conjecture as to the effects of the Netherland influence upon the development of civil liberty in England. We shall see more in the succeeding pages of the close connection between the two countries, and of the mode in which ideas familiar to the one poured into the other, where they were unknown or forgotten; it is sufficient now to point out some suggestive facts in connection with the settlements of the early Netherland refugees. When the civil war broke out in England, a war in which the insurgents demanded the civil rights long established in the Netherlands, and in the Netherlands alone, the army of the king was recruited mainly from the northern and western counties, while that of the Parliament was recruited from the eastern and southern counties, in which the Netherlanders had settled. The facts are no less significant in relation to the nativity of the great men of the Commonwealth, and of those who succeeded them as apostles of liberty. Oliver Cromwell came from fenny Huntingdonshire, and raised his famous Ironsides in the eastern counties. Ireton, his son-in-law, who stood next to him in military and civil ability, was born in the county of Nottingham. John Hampden was of a Buckinghamshire family, but his mother was a Cromwell. Fair-

fax was born in Yorkshire. Sir Harry Vane and Algernon Sidney were born in Kent, Lord William Russell and John Bunyan in Bedford, another fen district of the East.*

Such were some of the results of the presence in England of this peaceful army from the Netherlands, which crossed the Channel before the days of the Spanish Armada. That historians should, in the main, have discussed only the industrial side of this story, is no wise remarkable. The influence exerted by these foreigners upon the religion and politics of their adopted land was noiseless in its action and slow in bearing fruit. It appears in no act of Parliament, and can be measured

---

* Masson, in his "Life and Times of Milton," ii. 435, gives some tables showing the geographical distribution of the royalists and parliamentarians, as above stated, which make an instructive study in connection with the settlements of the Netherlanders the century before. The author remarks that his tables show some curious ethnological facts, but what they are he does not even intimate.

Since these pages were written John Fiske has published a very interesting book on the "Beginnings of New England," in which he calls attention to the facts stated by Masson, but neither author suggests any explanation of the geographical distribution of the Cavaliers and Puritans. Mr. Fiske estimates that two thirds of the Puritan settlers of New England came from the Eastern counties of England, and another third from the coast counties of the Southwest, Devonshire, Dorset, and Somerset (pp. 62, 63). John Southerden Burn, in his "History of the Protestant Refugees in England" (London, 1846), gives an account of Dutch and Walloon churches, nearly twenty in number, established in England during the sixteenth century; in London, Canterbury, Sandwich, Norwich, Southampton, Glastonbury, Rye, Winchelsea, Colchester, Yarmouth, Maidstone, Dover, Stamford, and Thetford. This list evidently does not make up the full number, as the record of many may have disappeared, but the reader will find here the names of six towns reproduced by the early colonists of America, while all of them are in districts which furnished New England with its settlers.

by no statistics showing its money value. Why should the chronicler of courts and factions, wars and political intrigues, or even the student of literature, take note of its existence?*

Still, this influence was no less real, and it throws light on much of the subsequent history of England: the extent to which the Bible came to be read among the working people in some sections of the country; the development in the same quarter of an intense moral and religious fervor; and the demand for equality before the law, which came to the surface when Parliament organized its army. In time, these Netherlanders, like the foreigners who had preceded them, were absorbed into the mass of the population, or went back to their old homes. The remorseless and demoralizing factory system was developed, taking the place of the little workshops in the private dwellings; an aristocracy of wealth arose to supplement and reinforce that of birth; the small freeholds were swallowed up by the vast estates; the English yeoman and the Netherland artisan disappeared together. These changes have been momentous in their effects upon the national character, but they were brought about after the settlement of America, and come only indirectly within the scope of the present work. It is important, however, to bear in mind that a

* In the Introduction to his "Etymological Dictionary," Prof. Walter W. Skeat, of Cambridge, refers very briefly to the great but unacknowledged influence of the Dutch upon English history, dating from the time of Edward III., and particularly noticeable in the days of Elizabeth. His remarks, however, are only suggestive of an unexplored field of research to which he claims to have first called attention, having probably been attracted to it by the number of Dutch words in the English language, while there are very few of modern German origin.

great change has taken place in the last two centuries and a half; and that the English Puritans, the course of whose development we are attempting to trace, the men who founded New England and marched to victory under Cromwell, bore little resemblance to the machine-like beings who have succeeded them in the factory and field.

If the presence in England of these Netherland refugees had produced no other effects than those already noticed, their immigration would be one of the memorable events of history. Certainly no body of men, seeking an asylum in distress, ever brought such gifts to repay their benefactors. But there was another result of their presence, more immediate and therefore more striking.

The great struggle for civil liberty in England, to which Puritanism gave birth, did not fairly open until after Elizabeth had passed away, friendless and unlamented. It ultimately settled the question between a despotic and a constitutional form of government for the English nation. Meantime, however, another question had to be determined—whether, when foes on all sides were plotting its destruction, there would remain such a thing as an English nation at all. It is customary to point to the destruction of the Spanish Armada as the event which decided that issue. But the cause of English Catholicism, the foe of the national existence, was dead before Philip's fleet ever set sail from home. Nothing was needed except to give it a fitting burial. That it certainly received when the doomed Spanish ships went down before the elements. No monarch, not even the greatest conqueror falling on the field of battle, could ask for a nobler resting-place than the ocean, or a funeral train more majestic than that which

followed, even into its grave, the Lost Cause of the sixteenth century.

The contest, in which English Catholicism as a political power disappeared forever, was carried on partly by land and partly by sea during the first twenty-five years of Elizabeth's reign. It was to some extent, as we have seen, a theological warfare, but, after all, dogmas played but a small part in its settlement. Protestantism won the victory because the English people came to believe that the Spaniards, who to them represented the papacy, were tyrannical, treacherous, cruel, and, what perhaps influenced them not the least, the natural enemies of their material prosperity. To establish such a belief, something was needed besides the lofty teachings of the Puritan divines, or the exemplary lives of the Netherland refugees.

That want was mainly supplied by the drama acted in the Netherlands, where Spain, although unconscious of the fact, was fighting for her life. It required some education to read the Bible and to comprehend the difference between the conflicting creeds, but here was a series of object-lessons which the most illiterate could understand. The exhibition during the reign of Mary had taught the people much; but that lesson was on a petty scale, and was brief in its duration. This was a tragedy that went on year after year, and was to continue for more than the lifetime of a man as allotted by the Psalmist. Its victims, instead of being counted by the score, were numbered by the tens of thousands.

Time softened the recollections of the Marian persecution. The ignorance, corruption, and immorality in the Established Church turned many men from a Reformation which could bear such fruits. In the northern

and western counties, the reaction in favor of the old faith was very marked when the Jesuits and seminary priests began their missionary labors. But nothing ever thus affected the population of the southern and eastern counties. They knew too well what was meant by a Catholic restoration. Their towns were filled with intelligent, truthful men, every one of whom was a living witness to tales of horror, compared with which the worst atrocities described in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" almost dwindled into insignificance. A few years ago an American scholar exhumed the old records and laid this story before the world. Its narration, even on the cold printed page, stirs a fever in the veins of the practical, unimpassioned man of the nineteenth century. Let the reader now try to imagine what was the effect upon the English people, when, by the fireside and in the market-place, this tale was told by thousands of men, women, and children, who themselves had seen the scaffolds running with blood, the flames blazing up around the stake, the sacking of towns, the violation of mothers, and the indiscriminate massacre of the white-haired grandfather and the helpless babe.

It was not necessary that the auditors should possess any deep religious convictions to be affected by such recitals. They belonged to a race who were then among the most romantic and poetical that the world has ever known. Everything in their lives had tended to develop these characteristics. In summer, the landsmen watched their sheep, surrounded by goblins and fairies, attendant spirits always bred in the imaginations of men engaged in such pursuits. In the long winter days, they had little to do except to indulge in the rudest of sports, tempered in the evening by the songs of their minstrels, who were pre-eminently a national institution, forerun-

ners of the host of singing birds that gave us the poetry of the Elizabethan age.*

The men who lived on the sea-coast were even more governed by their feelings and imagination. Navigation is to-day a matter of science. Vessels are propelled and steered by machinery. Every course is laid down on a chart, every harbor has been sounded, every market has been studied. Three hundred years ago, to the British sailor the world, outside a very narrow range, was an unexplored domain. It was a fairy region in which nothing was impossible, little improbable. For such a people Shakespeare wrote his plays. To them the witches of "Macbeth," the ghost in "Hamlet," the "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," were as real as any of the persons who lived about them. These Elizabethan Englishmen, with their poetical and chivalric instincts, were as impressionable as children, and as easily affected by anything which outraged their sense of justice, provided they themselves were not the aggressors. In addition to this, they had the love of adventure which has always marked the race. It was impossible that such men should be unaffected by such a war as was going on before their very eyes.

The first class in the community, moved to take an active part in the struggle, was, as might be expected, not composed of the religious or even the sober-minded ele-

---

* Guizot's "Shakespeare," pp. 38, 40. In 1315, the Royal Council, being desirous to suppress vagabondage, forbade all persons except minstrels to stop at the houses of prelates, earls, and barons to eat or drink; nor might there enter on each day, into such houses, "more than three or four minstrels of honor," unless the proprietor himself invited a larger number. In the days of Elizabeth the minstrels had fallen into some disrepute, but they had left their impress on the national character. Drake, p. 270.

ment. It was made up of the men whom civil convulsions usually bring to the surface, the scum of society, broken-down adventurers, who, having gambled away all else, have nothing left but their lives for stakes. How they took to the sea, and by their piracies reflected discredit on the English name, we have seen in a former chapter. Those who, at the outset, crossed over to the Netherlands and offered their services to the insurgents for the war by land, were of much the same character. Some did good service in the siege of Harlem, forming part of the heroic garrison which was massacred at its capture. But the majority were of a different stamp, being willing to fight on the side which gave the larger pay. So dangerous was the treachery among them that, in 1573, the Prince of Orange, unable to distinguish friend from foe, determined to send them all home, and they were accordingly dismissed.*

Five years elapsed before it was deemed safe to re-enlist any more English troops. In the interval, a decided change had taken place in public feeling. Elizabeth was pursuing her accustomed system of vacillation. If the patriots gained a victory she inclined to give them aid; but in their misfortunes, when assistance was most needed, she always professed herself the friend of Spain. It was not so, however, with her councillors, Burghley and Walsingham. They saw that in the success of the Netherland revolt lay the safety of England, and they encouraged in its behalf the Puritan sentiment, which was slowly developing into fanaticism. The corsairs on the sea were extending their field of operations. From

---

* Froude, xi. 33. Some of these volunteers exhibited the ferocity in the Netherlands which their countrymen had shown in Ireland. Froude, x. 393.

plundering defenceless merchant-men, they were reaching out to strike the guarded treasure-ships, and even to invade the sacred colonies of Spain. When unsuccessful, they learned, at the hands of the Inquisition, what the peaceful, unhappy Netherlanders had endured for years. Their tales of suffering confirmed those of the refugees, who, with fifty thousand tongues, were proclaiming the atrocities of Spain.

In 1578, just after the provinces of Holland and Zeeland had driven out the foreign invaders, Elizabeth, on ample security, loaned the insurgent states a hundred thousand pounds, and furnished them with five thousand troops to be supported at their own charge. Sir John Norris was in command, a man who had already shown in Ireland the ferocity of the English nature, but who was an able soldier, incorruptible, and devoted solely to the cause which he espoused. Thenceforth, and until the termination of the war, there poured into the Low Countries a constant stream of English soldiers. Not only did they do heroic service in the field, but they knit more closely than before the ties by which the two countries were united. In the end, the army of Prince Maurice was to become the military training-school of Europe, but that was after the death of William of Orange, when his son had developed into the greatest general of the age. Now, however, the English and the peaceful Hollanders were just learning the art of war, and the former, bred to out-door martial sports, naturally proved the readiest scholars. Again, as in times long past, they were fighting on Continental soil; and at Rymenant in 1578,* at Steenwyk in 1581,† and under the walls of

* Froude, xi. 146.

† Motley's "Dutch Republic," iii. 500.

Ghent, in 1582,* the English soldiers, led by the gallant Norris, proved that they had not lost the ancestral courage which won the victories of Cressy and Agincourt.

It was under these combined influences, working from within and from without, that an intense spirit of nationality was growing up in England, which, added to a developing Puritanism, left but a hopeless future to those who looked for a Catholic revival. Still, for many years, Elizabeth was little moved, and nothing could induce her to an open alliance with the Reformers. She went on intriguing now with France, and then again with Spain; lending a little money to the Netherlanders, and shortly afterwards demanding its immediate repayment; sending troops, and then recalling them in anger; ever seeking to save herself, no matter what became either of her allies or of the Protestant religion. But from the time that the Jesuits and seminary priests entered upon their invasion of the kingdom, even her eyes began to open, although, as will be seen hereafter, the effect which external danger produced upon her was very different from that which it produced upon the nation itself.

The first outside light came from Ireland. That ill-fated satrapy had been conquered by Henry II., in the twelfth century, under a bull from the pope, who claimed jurisdiction over it as an isle of the sea. It was described as almost a heathen land, and the professed objects of the English were to Christianize and civilize its people. How these objects have been carried out, during the past six centuries, the world knows by heart. Ireland is a small field, but it is one in which the worst

* Froude, xi. 596.

side of the English nature has been thoroughly displayed. Everything has been attempted for the conquerors, nothing for the conquered. The result has been a constant slow fever of discontent, broken only by intermittent revolutions. During the reign of Elizabeth the revolutions seemed chronic, for, added to all former grievances, was finally the attempt to take away the old religion, the sole remaining link which bound the island to its famous past, when it re-Christianized its neighbor. We have already seen something of the ferocity developed in the earlier Irish wars. It was now to be exhibited on a broader scale, since a religious element was added.

For years, Philip had been urged to attack England from the side of Ireland, but he had persistently refused. He hoped that Elizabeth would be reconciled with Rome, and, even though she died a nominal Protestant, her next heir was still alive, and that heir was a professed Catholic. Under these circumstances, he felt loath to provoke an open warfare. But, in 1580, Francis Drake was returning home from his piratical circuit of the globe, English soldiers were pouring into the Netherlands by thousands, and it began to dawn on the slow-witted Philip that the war which he was trying to avoid had already opened. He therefore consented to the fitting-out in his port of several vessels, which carried eight hundred troops, mostly Italians furnished by the pope, to aid some Irish insurgents. They landed in Ireland, in September, 1580, just after the Jesuits Parsons and Campian had entered on their missionary work in England. All England was aroused, and volunteers flocked forward—among them being Walter Raleigh and Edmund Spenser the poet—to defend the cause of English nationality and the Protestant religion.

The open hostilities were not of long duration, for they continued only about a year. Then the rebels broke up into little bands of wandering outlaws, to be hunted down and slaughtered like wild beasts. The work of extermination lasted for two years more. When it ended, the province of Munster was substantially depopulated, and the remainder of the island reduced to almost utter barbarism.* On neither side was mercy shown or quarter given on account of age or sex. Among the Irish this was to be expected, for they were semi-savages fighting for their homes. But to understand the conduct of the English, we must remember that to them the Irish were more than savages—they were Papists, children of a Church which, to the average Englishman, was beginning to represent the embodiment of all iniquity. The men who consigned to indiscriminate slaughter the half-naked kern, with his defenceless wife and nursing babe, thought they were doing the work of God. In the Old Testament they found such lessons, and for the Gospel of Peace they were as yet unprepared.

The stories of the Irish massacres which followed the Reformation make a sad tale to read, but, apart from their bearing on other questions, they form an important chapter in the history of English Puritanism. Each returning soldier came back with a new hatred of the Catholics, aroused, perhaps, more by the injuries which he had inflicted than by those which he had suffered, but no less bitter on that account. In addition, there was many an English soldier lying in an unknown Irish grave,

---

* Froude, xi. 252–287. See also Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," ii. 104, etc., for an account of the English atrocities, surpassing anything perpetrated by Alva in the Netherlands.

whose kinsmen cried out for vengeance on all Papists. Thus from two quarters, the Netherlands and Ireland, the current of Protestantism in England was gaining force. As for Elizabeth, she was slowly learning that, even in her unavowed warfare, there were blows to be received as well as to be given. How this lesson was to be impressed upon her from other directions will be shown in the next chapters.

END OF VOL. I.

KEENE STATE COLLEGE
LIBRARY

48481

DATE DUE			

E
188
.C2
v.1

MASON LIBRARY
KEENE STATE COLLEGE
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

KEENE STATE COLLEGE / MASON LIBRARY
E 188.C2
Campbell, Douglas,
The Puritan in Holland, England, and Ame
3 5079 00050592 8
W6-AEL-350